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A Work Of Faith

The First Thirty-Five Years

Coggins Memorial Baptist Church

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COGGINS MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH--
A WORK OF FAITH

It is with grateful appreciation that we acknowledge the following members and former members who contributed in some way to the writing of this first complete church history.

We are grateful to...

*Our researchers: Ellen Kephart, Lillian Hyatt, Lucille Allen, Lionel Wall, Grace Smith and Margaret Byrd. They spent countless hours delving through church records and files in order to verify facts and figures.

*Former members, Mr. and Mrs. Thurman Fritts and Mrs. Bessie Blackwell for sharing their recollections with us concerning the early years of our church.

*Mrs. Lois Beck and Mrs. Jettie Brigman, who not only shared old photographs to be used in our book, but also shared personal remembrances dealing with the life of Coggins.

*All former pastors who responded to our request for current information.

*Those men who were ordained into the gospel ministry by Coggins Memorial for responding to questionnaires concerning their call into the ministry.

*Our pastor, Dearl L. Bunce, for initiating and seeing the need for a complete written church history.

*Mrs. Betty Bunce for hours of proof-reading and editing.

*Our writer and typist, Mrs. Margaret M. Byrd, for compiling the information and writing it in manuscript form over a period of five years.

Please accept our apologies in advance if errors of any type are found within this manuscript. Great care was taken with this project, but it is possible that somewhere along the way we have failed to mention people or events one would consider important. This history is as accurate and as complete as we could make it, but at the same time it is subject to human error for which we apologize.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

One may wonder what the purpose of writing a church history may be other than to simply preserve facts, figures, significant dates, and incidents in the life of a church. It has been said that a church can never be truly understood by its members until those members know something of its history.

Why Coggins Memorial Baptist Church was organized, who played important roles in its organization, what difficulties have been faced and obstacles overcome, and what victories have been won are some of the questions we feel will be answered in this first complete history of Coggins Memorial.

It is not our desire to glorify any pastor, church member, or group of members, but to wholly glorify our Lord and Savior who implanted a vision thirty-five years ago in the minds of a few of His people and who is still doing so today. It is our hope that in knowing the history of our church, the older members will be able to reflect on days gone by, new members will become familiar with their church's heritage, and our total membership will understand and appreciate more dearly the fellowship we share in this beloved place of worship; and perhaps in the process, we will gain a new vision of what Christ would have us do in service for Him in the years yet to come.

Publication date--September 1987

A WORK OF FAITH

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).

Often the Lord uses individuals in very unique ways to carry out his special plans. Such was the case of Mrs. Mary Beck Coggins, a dear lady who had a vision of a Baptist church on the south side of Lexington. Perhaps even Mrs. Coggins never imagined what her bequeathal would mean to this community or in what a marvelous way God would use her legacy.

Mrs. Charles (Mary) Coggins, a faithful and devoted member of First Baptist Church in Lexington, wrote in her last will and testament dated September 30, 1936, **"I wish to bequest $1000 for a church, and a Baptist church, on this end of town as I feel there will be one sometime. I would like for it to be named Coggins Memorial."** In December 1948, Mrs. Coggins' will was made public upon her death. She had left not only $1000 but also had stated in a December 4, 1946 addition to her will that three and one-half lots of land were to be included on which a church could be built. She bequeathed an additional $2000 toward the building of the church with the stipulation that it should be a brick structure. She expressed the desire for her own home, which was located at 1307 South Main Street, to be used as a parsonage eventually. This act of generosity by a dear lady who had lived in the community for many years was the beginning of a Christian witness in South Lexington founded entirely by faith.

Rev. J. Roy Clifford, pastor of First Baptist Church, and the members of his congregation started the Coggins Memorial Chapel as a mission project. A meeting was held in the living room of the Coggins homeplace on South Main Street to make plans for beginning this new venture. Ten people were present at the Thursday night meeting in February 1949 as they discussed what needed to be done to make Mrs. Coggins' vision begin to take shape. It was immediately noted that a good deal of remodeling would need to be

done to the house before it could be used for church services. The remodeling was taken care of by Thurman Fritts and Wesley Odell Beck who was a brother of Mary Coggins. Mr. Fritts was asked to serve as superintendent of the new mission and gave generously of his time and abilities during this period. Edgar and Bessie Bridges also helped spearhead the establishment of the mission since their home was in the community.

Beginning in February 1949, Thursday evening prayer services led by Rev. Clifford were held in the Coggins' house, and the people who attended these sessions were looking forward to beginning Sunday services whenever leadership could be obtained. On March 13, 1949, the first Sunday service was started at the Coggins Chapel with thirty-one present. Rev. Clifford, pastor of the mission at this time, made arrangements to come to the mission on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. to hold worship service, and then he would return to First Baptist in order to lead the worship hour at 11:00 a.m. Coggins Chapel held their Sunday School hour at 11:00 a.m. following their worship service. These "reversed services" proved to be very successful as the mission experienced steady growth. Leaders of the mission spent many hours visiting in the neighborhood and inviting people to the chapel. G. W. Miller taught the Men's Class in the mission for a year until at the age of 80 he had to retire due to his health. In just two months, on May 22, 1949, the attendance for Sunday services had risen from thirty-one to seventy-five, and people were still being added. Neighbors and the entire town were talking about this great effort and were excited about its possibilities.

Rev. Clifford then left the mission to return fulltime to his duties at First Baptist. During the next two months, Rev. R. N. Hardin and Rev. Luther Morphis served as part-time pastors for the mission. In February 1950, Rev. Leonard Rollins, assistant pastor of First Baptist Church, came to serve as pastor of the Coggins Chapel. He held Sunday services and Thursday evening prayer meetings as well as visited in the community on Thursdays. Not having any form of transportation other than his own two feet, Rev. Rollins walked over the entire community, sharing meals with church members and endearing himself to them in such a way that the church grew in spiritual fellowship. Pinto beans, cornbread, and milk were tasty fare when shared in such sweet fellowship. During the six months

Rev. Rollins was at the mission, thirty-nine additions were made, including seven homes in which both the husband and wife were baptized. In his own words, it was his "happy privilege" to serve such a people during such special days of excitement and anticipation.

Several of the chapel members recall the very first revival services held at Coggins Chapel in 1950. Leonard Rollins preached this summer revival and Rev. Ray Hodge served as song leader. The services took place in the backyard of the Chapel as worshippers fanned to try and keep cool as well as fight the bugs away. Lights had been strung from the trees to give light for the services. Chairs and benches were brought from individual's homes, and the old piano was rolled out onto the back porch for the singing. Thurman and Lillian Fritts vividly remember these services. According to their recollections, on Saturday night before the revival began, there had been a great rainstorm which left everything soaking wet. After the Sunday service, the electric wires and lights had to be taken down and stored inside the house. Not knowing that the electricity had not been cut off, little four-year-old Frankie Fritts became entangled with the wires which rolled around him and gave him a tremendous shock. Members rushed to disconnect the power, expecting the worst; however, Frankie suffered no signs of ill effects from his experience. Thurman and Lillian say they "consider this to be a first in many miracles at this mission."

In August 1950, Rev. Rollins left the Coggins Chapel to attend New Orleans Seminary. Members were saddened to lose someone so dear to their hearts, but they knew he was following God's leadership. The chapel members presented him with a love gift of $100.00 upon his departure.

An interesting incident in the days of the mission and one that is little known by most members took place during the early days. While the members were still meeting in the South Main Street house, they had allowed a Latvian family of four to live in two rooms of the Coggins' home. This family had been brought to the United States following World War II after having lived in concentration camps. The chapel members gave them a place and, with help from the First Baptist Church, furnished the two-room apartment for them. A small kerosene stove with a portable oven was given to the family for cooking purposes. Never having seen such an appliance,

the Latvians were terrified to use it. After much instruction by patient and loving members, the family felt secure that the stove would not hurt them, and they began enjoying this "luxury item," the likes of which they had never imagined.

While still in the mission, Misses Mary Allison and Janice Martin, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Martin and members of First Baptist Church, presented the Coggins Chapel a piano to be used for the Thursday and Sunday services. The ladies of First Baptist organized the Mary Coggins Circle as part of a Woman's Missionary Union effort for the chapel at this time as well. Such generosity and expressions of encouragement were typical of our brothers and sisters in Christ at the "First Church" as God used them to help the chapel fulfill its mission.

On June 11, 1951, the Coggins Chapel Committee, consisting of Waldo Beck (chairman), Foley Coleman, J. G. Stiers, Terry Lowery and Thurman Fritts wrote a letter to the deacons of First Baptist stating they had **"met and discussed the conditions and requirements of organizing the chapel into an independent, cooperative Missionary Baptist Church."** The letter further stated that they felt Rev. J. W. Dickens should be called to be pastor and that a budget should be adopted that would include gifts to the Cooperative Program and special offerings to the Southern Baptist Convention. They also **"agreed that we will use Southern Baptist literature in all organizations of the church...seek the counsel and guidance of state and southwide authorities in planning the new building... and adopt the church covenant and the New Hampshire Confession of Faith."** The following served as leaders and officers in the newly established church:

Church Clerk:	Lionel Wall	Treasurer:	Edgar Bridges
Trustees:	Edgar Bridges	WMU Pres.:	Bessie Bridges
	Handy Byrd	Training Union Dir.:	Foley Coleman
	W. O. Beck		
	George Hicks		
Sunday School Supt.:	Thurman Fritts		

The first deacons of Coggins Memorial were:

J. G. Stiers	Foley Coleman	Waldo Beck
Terry Lowery	Thurman Fritts	Conrad Lyon
George Hicks	Troy Mitchell	

On July 21, 1951, Rev. J. Roy Clifford, pastor of First Baptist Church, wrote a letter to the Coggins Chapel members saying, **"The next ten days will be momentous in the life of the Chapel."** He stated further that on Sunday, August 5, 1951 at 3:00 p.m. at the Chapel on 1307 South Main Street, the Liberty Baptist Association moderator, J. O. Walton, and his Council would meet to **"organize the Chapel into a full independent cooperating Missionary Baptist Church."** The letter further issued an invitation to all Chapel members to attend the morning worship service at First Baptist on July 29, 1951, to sit together on the center section of pews that would be reserved for them alone, and to **"demonstrate what a splendid group make up the Chapel constituency."**

COGGINS MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH BECOMES A REALITY

August 5, 1951 signified the beginnings of Coggins Memorial Baptist Church. After a motion was made by Thurman Fritts and seconded by Handy Byrd that the newly-formed church accept the Resolution of Organization which had been read to the congregation, the Resolution was unanimously affirmed. All those signing the Resolution within thirty days would be considered charter members of Coggins Memorial Baptist Church. The floor was then opened for nominations for pastor. Rev. J. W. Dickens, part-time pastor of Center Hill Baptist Church and attending Fruitland Bible Institute, was nominated by Foley Coleman and seconded by J. G. Stiers as part-time pastor of the church. Rev. Clifford then gave the Charge to the Church. Using a reference from I Corinthians 3, he advised the people to make **"We preach Christ crucified"** the **"theme, the burden, the teaching, the praying, and the witnessing of the church in the days to come."**

At a business conference on August 12, 1951, Rev. Dickens spoke to the new church concerning his views and convictions before he had them make their final decision concerning him as pastor. He stated his beliefs as follows:

> First of all, I believe in the missionary Baptist church. I believe in pastoral ethics. We will cooperate with other preachers and churches both Baptist and other denominations. We will not try to gain members for our church by obtaining them at the expense of other churches; this would not be helping the Lord's work.

He then retired to another room of the mission while the church members discussed his comments and took their final vote. He was unanimously approved at a salary of $1600 yearly. Thurman Fritts made the motion seconded by Terry Lowery.

Under the able leadership of Rev. Dickens, the mission petitioned the Liberty Baptist Association for membership in that body on September 6, 1951. The Letter of Petition was carried to Greenwood Baptist Church, host of the Liberty Baptist Associational annual meeting, and was approved. The period of thirty days that had been extended to all those wanting charter membership was now over. A total of sixty-five had accepted this honorable opportunity. A list of these charter members may be found on page 90 of this history.

During a business conference on September 9, 1951, the church voted to purchase a lot facing Harrington Avenue with a frontage of 100 feet and a depth of 175 feet. The price was stated to be $900.00, and it was explained by Waldo Beck that if this land was purchased, it would then mean that when the church was built, we would be able to have not only a South Main Street entrance but a Harrington Avenue entrance as well. Foley Coleman made the motion and Thurman Fritts seconded it. The vote was approved and the trustees were advised to begin proceedings to purchase this land.

On December 17, 1951, the church received a deed from T. C. and Betty Washburn and their children for a parcel of land at the rear of the lot behind the Coggins homeplace. This land had not been requested by the church, but the Washburn family wished to make a love gift of the property in order to square off the lot behind the house. Such a gesture was characteristic of the warm feelings and expressions of support from members and friends in the community.

At the time of the church's establishment, Coggins Memorial had a charter membership of 65, a Sunday School enrollment of 172, a WMU enrollment of 24, a strong Training Union program with an enrollment of 66, and total receipts for the year were $2722.54. The church was growing! God was blessing! The mission walls were bulging with overflowing crowds. It

was time to make Mary Beck Coggins' vision even more of a reality--**time to build a church!**

THE BUILDING BEGINS

"And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord." (Acts 11:21).

Such a short time actually--August 5, 1951 to February 17, 1952--since the chapel had been organized as a wholly independent Southern Baptist church. Numbers were increasing each week for the Sunday School and worship services. It was soon evident to all that the old Coggins homeplace was no longer sufficient within itself to house a growing congregation.

On February 17, 1952, the church met in conference and voted to give Thurman Fritts and Wesley Odell Beck permission to purchase building materials for their eagerly-anticipated church building. A Building Committee was elected which consisted of Thurman Fritts, Foley Coleman, Waldo Beck, W. O. Beck and Conrad Lyon. Trustees at this time were Handy Byrd, Bill Brigman, and W. O. Beck. Thurman Fritts felt led to leave his current fulltime job as a brickmason in order to supervise the erection of a church plant for a salary of $60.00 per week. W. O. Beck, an architect by trade, drew the plans for the structure which had been adapted from suggestions by the Baptist Sunday School Board. He then presented them to the church as a gift. It was agreed that the majority of the work would be done by volunteer labor but that Thurman and W. O. would be given permission to request paid laborers if needed. At this same meeting, the church agreed to begin the first church bulletin through the use of a small Sears mimeograph machine in order to provide an order of worship for each service.

GROUNDBREAKING DAY ARRIVES

Groundbreaking ceremonies for the new church plant were held on Sunday, March 23, 1952, a Palm Sunday not soon to be forgotten. The main address was presented by Rev. Clifford and scripture was read by Rev. Dickens.

Sam J. Smith, associational moderator, delivered the greetings from the Liberty Baptist Association. A congregation of seventy-five watched with excitement and anticipation as Rev. Dickens, Foley Coleman, Sam Smith, Thurman Fritts, and Rev. Vann Carroll, who was then Associational Missionary, dug the first shovels of dirt to commemorate the beginning of the building program.

March 23, 1952 was a day of promise and the beginnings of a new day in the lives of those who had so fervently prayed that God would bless them with their own house of worship. It was, however, a day of tragedy as well. It was to be the last time Rev. Dickens would stand before his friends and family at Coggins Memorial as their pastor. Immediately following the groundbreaking, Rev. Dickens returned to Fruitland Bible Institute in Hendersonville to continue his studies which were drawing to a close. He was to return to Lexington after his graduation to continue his ministry as pastor. On the day he was to return, however, Rev. Dickens was involved in a terrible car accident in Cherryville and was critically injured. He later died at Camp Butner Hospital on May 23, 1952--exactly two months to the day since his participation in the groundbreaking ceremonies for the church he had so humbly pastored. Rev. Dickens was described by one member as being a "gentle, caring man who preached and visited and was greatly loved." He was also greatly missed, but the members of Coggins knew that he would have been disappointed in them if this tragedy halted their progress in the building program. The work that he had so lovingly initiated and in which he had planned to spend many hours was to continue even though God had called him home.

The first bricks for the new building were laid on May 2, 1952. The permit to build was issued on September 9 with an estimated cost of $20,000 for the building. Work was begun on the church and was done mainly on Saturdays by volunteer labor. The men of Coggins gave many long, hard hours of back-breaking labor in order for the plant to be constructed as economically as possible. As one member remembers it, "We were very, very poor!" It was indeed a labor of love as the men worked each evening on the building after putting in a full day's work at their regular jobs. Saturdays were also busy days as members contributed in whatever way possible. The women made sure the men were well fed and kept them supplied

with food and drink all day. All workers and the ladies of the church would enjoy picnic lunches and dinners together in their partially-constructed church building with no floor under their feet and no roof over their heads but with a deep love in their hearts for each other and for their purpose in being there.

One particular day, the Latvian family who had since moved from the Coggins homeplace to a house on Ford Street, called Lillian Fritts to tell her they had a present for her. When she went by their house, they presented her with a big, **live** goose! It seemed that someone had given it to them for Easter and they could no longer afford to feed it but could not bear the thoughts of eating it. Lillian took the goose, killed it, prepared it for cooking, and then brought it to the picnic on Saturday to share with the workers and their families. It was a "day of rejoicing," Mrs. Fritts says. Upon the writing of this history, several members who used almost the exact same wording, expressed the tremendous spirit of love and peace, special closeness and pure joy during this period of building. It not only was felt in the church family but also throughout the entire community. One dear lady said that "it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience" that would always be remembered.

GOD PROVIDES THE MAN

"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jeremiah 3:15).

During the illness and after the death of Rev. Dickens, Rev. R. N. Hardin had been called to serve as supply pastor until a fulltime pastor could be secured. A pulpit committee consisting of Kenneth Lawrence, Wilbur Abernathy, Conrad Lyon, Bessie Bridges, and Lionel Wall was elected and began their considerations for the man God would have to lead this newly-organized Southern Baptist church.

In a letter dated June 8, 1952, the church issued a call to Rev. Leonard Rollins to return to Lexington and assume the position of the first fulltime pastor of Coggins Memorial. He was attending New Orleans Seminary and serving a small church in Dozier, Alabama at this time. It was also during this time that he met Mary Frances (Polly) White

of Birmingham, Alabama and married her. Polly was a graduate of Birmingham-Southern College and had received her Minister of Religious Education degree from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in May 1952. The church felt that God was leading them to this young couple and that he had prepared them for this new ministry. Leonard and Polly accepted the call issued by the church and returned to Coggins Memorial on August 3, 1952 to preach his first sermon. They moved into a furnished house at 211 Mendota Avenue which was furnished by the church. In an editorial in the Dispatch dated July 28, 1952, entitled "A Welcome Return," the editor stated:

> A great many Lexington people who were favorably impressed by Rev. Leonard Rollins during his previous stay here will join in welcoming him when he returns here this week.... Mr. Rollins particularly won the affections of the members of this new church and of the people of the section of the city and suburbs it particularly served. He will find ...an inspiring eagerness among the members to go ahead with an advanced program under his leadership. The attractive wife the young minister has acquired during his absence will also be cordially welcomed and should be a fine asset to the growing young church as a trained worker.

Polly certainly proved to be "a fine asset" to our church. She is truly one of God's "saints" who is still a beloved part of Coggins Memorial.

On September 21, 1952, the trustees secured a loan of $25,000 at five percent interest in order to finish the building. Work was coming along slowly due to heavy rains which were hampering progress.

An important event during 1952 was the establishment of a Brotherhood on December 12. The chapter was organized with thirteen charter members on that date during a special meeting. Horace Easom, executive secretary of the N. C. Baptist Brotherhood was guest speaker. Waldo Beck was elected as President of the church's first brotherhood organization.

The total value of the church property was listed in the Associational Minutes as $9,608.00. During the year there had been fourteen baptisms and twenty-one members added by transfer of letters. The church's enrollment was 95--an increase of thirty members since the chapel had been started. God was working among his people!

THE BUILDING CONTINUES

Work was nearing completion in January 1953 as members watched eagerly. At long last the building was more than just drawings on a blueprint. It was slowly becoming tangible evidence of hard work and high expectations. The community was looking on as the work continued, and their interest became more evident as the church began receiving love gifts toward the building program. Some of the contributors were Center Hill Baptist, United Furniture, E. G. Fritts, Dacotah Cotton Mills, John Sink, Ben F. Lee, R. W. Martin, and Belk-Martin Company. There were others, we are certain, who contributed; however, no permanent record was available. Even though we may not know their names, they know who they are, and God has surely blessed their generosity.

THE FIRST SERVICES HELD

On February 15, 1953, Coggins Memorial Baptist Church held its first Sunday services in the newly-constructed building at 8 Harrington Avenue. A news article from the Dispatch dated February 14, 1953 called it **"a religious milestone"** and a Greensboro Daily News article dated February 15, 1953 said this service was **"marking a milestone in the rapid development of this church which began as a small mission in March 1949."** Indeed, it was a milestone! The following is a description of the 44' x 93' building as it appeared in the February 14 Dispatch article:

> The upper floor of the building has an auditorium capable of seating 275 persons, with space also for three classrooms for 25 persons each, divided by modern folding doors. On the lower basement floor there are four assembly rooms for the young people, intermediates, juniors, and primaries in the center, with classrooms on each side. On the upper floor, too, are the church office, nursery, and beginner departments and rest rooms. The new building will be furnished during this week with equipment from the mission building, but new pews have been installed. The interior is painted a warm yellow shade, and overhead finish is in sound-proof celotex. Flooring is of hard wood, and finishes are simple in keeping with the future purpose of the building. The building, valued at $55,000, was erected at a cost of $31,000 by the use of volunteer labor.

How exciting it must have been to those early church members to see their vision becoming reality! During the week before the building was first used on February 15, the Lord blessed with an abundance of rain. On late Saturday evening, Lois Beck had these memories: "My husband and I stopped by (the building) just to look and thank God. He said to me, 'God is here and waiting for us tomorrow.'" According to Lois, "Tomorrow came, and with it the rain!" Upon entering the new building, the members found the men of the church with their trouser legs rolled up, mopping water because the basement had leaked! It might not have been an auspicious beginning to such a momentous day, but it certainly was the first of many, many years of "mopping up" our men at Coggins have had to endure!

Despite the deluge of rain on Saturday and the sprinkling of rain all day on Sunday, the first services at Coggins Memorial were attended by **177** for Sunday School and **70** for Training Union. Two new members were received by letter at the morning worship and the offering amounted to almost $300.00--an excellent offering for this small church in 1953. Among the visitors were associational missionary Rev. Vann Carroll, Rev. R. N. Hardin who had served as supply pastor for a few months and was now attending Southeastern Baptist Seminary in Wake Forest, and other visitors and friends. Open House was held from 2-5 p.m. on Sunday afternoon with a steady flow of visitors coming by to look over the new church plant and welcomed addition to the community.

The first church pianist was Mrs. Bessie Bridges (Blackwell) who also assisted the pastor in preparing the weekly church bulletin. Kenneth Lawrence served as first church music director, and Lillian Fritts was choir director and assistant church pianist. Lionel Wall became the first church clerk and is currently serving in that position in 1987 making him the first and only church clerk we have ever had.

1953 CONTINUES TO BE A BUSY YEAR

The church voted on Sunday, June 21, to remodel the old Coggins homeplace so that it might be used as a parsonage. It was on October 19 that the church agreed to borrow $6500 for this purpose whereupon renovation work began. New appliances were purchased, one bedroom was completely

furnished as a guest room, a new furnace had been installed in October at a cost of $2060, and blinds were bought for the entire house. Remodeling continued and was completed to the church's satisfaction. Leonard and Polly Rollins vividly remember moving into the house on South Main Street. Rev. Rollins says, **"We felt rich when we moved into that big house. The heating unit for the house, located next to Grady Coggins' store, would be flooded out during any kind of rain, and I would have to get Thurman Fritts out of bed to get heat."** Despite heating and other problems befitting an older house, the parsonage was a delight to the Rollins couple and to the church family who were always made to feel welcome by Polly's "open door" policy.

On July 3, 1953, the church voted to set aside the first Sunday in August as Homecoming Day. The first Homecoming was held on August 2, 1953 as worshippers gathered for the morning worship followed by a family picnic lunch spread on the rear lawn of the parsonage. Picnics such as this first one became annual events where good food and fellowship became a great tradition.

On August 25, Leonard Rollins left to complete his final year of study for his Master of Divinity degree at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest. He returned each weekend in order to hold Sunday services for his congregation. Rev. Rollins recalls this last year of school as one of the hardest. **"Polly was having health problems and our first daughter, Jane, was born. Many individuals stood by and ministered to Polly while I had to be away at school,"** Rollins said.

In the fall of 1953, the Brotherhood poured a concrete sidewalk leading to the front of the church as a gift from their organization. No convenient air conditioning system was to be found at Coggins during 1953. If you wanted to keep cool during services, it had to be hand-powered cooling--that's right, just pick up one of the hand fans donated by a local funeral home and fan away! If you were a child and did not care about the heat, the fans were an excellent means of writing notes to each other during worship--children will be children!

A church whose beginning was marred by tragedy upon the death of Rev. Dickens again felt the blow on July 16, 1953 when Waldo Beck, a beloved and respected charter member of Coggins, was struck and killed by a truck. Waldo had served as Brotherhood president, church deacon, member

of the Building Committee, volunteer laborer who had worked numerous hours on the new church plant, and dedicated leader in many other areas. His wife, Lois, was leading in many areas as well, "doing in order to learn," she said. It was a sorrowful day in the young life of our church as Waldo Beck's funeral became the first one to be held at Coggins Memorial. God works in his own way, however, as another first took place in the Beck family--one which can be remembered with joy. Waldo and Lois Beck's daughter, Carolyn, was the first person to be baptized in the new church. The first wedding took place in 1953 when Miss Judy Byrd and Mr. Charles Dickens, who was the son of the late Rev. J. W. Dickens, were married in the church sanctuary.

In August 1953, our deacons participated in a Deacon's Retreat at Caswell Baptist Assembly which was a first for our church. This group of men was recognized in an article which appeared in Charity and Children in these words:

> The fact that this church had more deacons present than any other church was not surprising to folks in the Liberty Association who have marveled at the way these men support all phases of the Baptist program. And then to make the record more outstanding, the church is only two years old. The men have a Brotherhood and at every quarterly meeting of the Liberty Associational Deacons, the church has a large representation on hand. This growing church is setting an example for many other churches to follow in its wholehearted support of the Baptist program.

The deacons attending this significant retreat were George Hicks, Thurman Fritts, Kenneth Lawrence, Troy Mitchell, Conrad Lyon, and Foley Coleman, chairman of the deacons. We also had a group of Royal Ambassadors who attended the RA Congress in Atlanta, Georgia in August 1953. Their trip was totally supported by personal contributions from the church Brotherhood. These "young men" who attended were Kenneth Coleman, Bill Lowery, Ralph Byrd, and David Bullaboy.

Other organizations were growing and expanding during these first months in the new church facility. Lois Beck was the leader of an active and enthusiastic Girl's Auxiliary group who enjoyed many mother-daughter banquets and other special occasions. Sunbeams, for preschoolers, were meeting each Wednesday night. The Woman's Missionary Union under the leadership of Bessie Bridges expanded to a morning meeting as well as

their regular evening meetings. Church Training Union under the leadership of Foley Coleman was continuing to grow. Quarterly fellowships were being held which contributed to the spirit of unity and closeness among the congregation. New Sunday School classes were being organized. As one member expressed it, there was the **"pure joy of just being together--at church, at home prayer meetings, and social events. We were all new Christians and couldn't get our fill of Bible study, discussions, etc."**

During 1953, the total church budget was $9,031.00. There were fifteen people who made decisions for Christ and were baptized, twenty-five people had joined by letter, and the total membership was now 129. The Sunday School program was averaging 178 weekly, the Training Union was averaging 75 each Sunday evening, and there were 52 attending the Wednesday night prayer service.

If there had ever been doubt in anyone's mind whether or not there was a need for a church or whether it could be successful on the southside of town, whether or not it would be supported by the community, whether or not God would bless the efforts of this small group of believers, and whether or not those believers would maintain their enthusiasm and eagerness to serve and give hours of time and unbounded energy, that doubt had disappeared. Coggins Memorial Baptist was a vital and breathing church--a work of faith that God was continuing to bless!

"AND WHATSOEVER YOU DO, DO IT HEARTILY, AS TO THE LORD, AND NOT UNTO MEN" (COL. 3:23).

Searching back through every type of recorded information and church records, we find that 1954 was a very productive year. Several special events took place that deserve mention and a few others are simply matters of interest.

Even though the church building was now almost one year old, gifts were still being graciously given and were coming from many sources. Dacotah Mills, a past contributor and neighbor of the church, again presented the church with a check for $250.00 to be used as needed. Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Roach generously donated a pump organ, and forty-five wooden chairs were purchased on December 19, 1954 from First Baptist Church by Lois Beck at a cost of $1.00 each to be used by the Primary Department.

Conrad Lyon and Kenneth Lawrence built the brick signboard which stands now in the front yard of the church. Notably, a spirit of cooperation and eagerness to be of help prevailed throughout the early years.

A new piano was purchased for the sanctuary during 1954 much to the excitement of the Coggins choir of twelve members. At this time, the choir had no music budget and was being directed voluntarily by Lois Beck.

J. L. Burleson was hired on November 11, 1954 to be the first janitor at a salary of $45.00 per month. Mr. Burleson accepted Christ late in life, but he was convinced that his life should count for God. Knowing he was not called to teach or serve in any other position, he accepted his janitorial duties as an opportunity to serve God.

In a September 27, 1954 article from The Dispatch, we find that Coggins was second in the Liberty Association churches in net membership gain for the year with a total gain of thirty-seven members. It stated further that, **"In Sunday School gain locally, Coggins led with 57. This church has a somewhat unique record, with 166 enrolled church members and 399 enrolled in Sunday School."** Unique, indeed! But such was the history up to this point.

The Sunday School set a record on April 18, 1954 with 209 present. Records, however, are made to be broken. On May 9, 1954 the attendance was 221 with an average May attendance of 203.

On August 1, 1954 the annual Homecoming Day was celebrated and the following record was shared with the congregation. The church was now three years old, and in the past two years there had been 84 additions. This made a total membership of 166, a Sunday School enrollment of 338, a Training Union enrollment of 152, a WMU enrollment of 53, and a Brotherhood enrollment of 45. The summer Vacation Bible School, under the direction of Lois Beck as school principal, enrolled 166 children and youth from the community. One of this writer's most poignant memories was that of the big VBS picnics held in the backyard of the parsonage at the end of a VBS week. It was such a thrill to be escorted across South Main Street by a uniformed policeman who had stopped traffic just for us! What great memories of these daytime VBS sessions and picnics!

The total budget for the year was $9886, and the pastor's salary was $3480.00. Homecoming Day was certainly a day of celebration as one reflected on the past three years' growth.

A CHRISTMAS TO REMEMBER

Christmas is always a special time in the hearts and minds of Christians as the glorious birth of our Savior is celebrated and remembered with reverence and awe. It is also a time of fun and fellowship and, more than likely, a few humorous incidents thrown in! Such was the case with one of the first Christmas celebrations at Coggins. The very first Christmas program ever held proved to be a new experience since absolutely no one had ever tried to produce such an event before. It was finally decided, after much deliberation, that there would be scripture reading, scenery, and choir singing to mark this special occasion. One of the church's neighbors, Mrs. Ethel Swift, painted scenery on boxboard, a curtain was rigged haphazardly on clotheswire stretched across the platform, and the choir huddled together in a corner of the sanctuary "literally stepping on one another," as one member reminisced. During one of the choir's most important and inspirational songs, the curtain broke. Amidst sounds of muffled laughter that could not be suppressed, Thurman Fritts calmly picked up the end of the curtain, held it high, and stayed in that position until the program ended. As another member remembers, "I'm afraid we weren't very reverent after that, for we all had the giggles!"

At another program several years later, the "angel", Joyce Cox, was standing on a platform in the baptistry. During the program in an overheated sanctuary, our "angel" very quietly fainted. A very astute deacon saw what was going to happen as she swayed back and forth, quickly ran behind her in the baptistry, and caught her before she hit the floor--our "fallen angel" had been saved from very probable injury.

For the annual city Christmas parade, the church entered a float for this December 1, 1954 event. The work was led by Ned Beck, Modie Hough, Lee Hill Sr., Doris Yarbrough, Ralph Byrd, Aileen Lyon, and Thurman Fritts. The title of this one and only float ever entered in a city parade was "No Room In the Inn" and carried three young people portraying

Mary, Joseph, and the innkeeper. A picture of this famous float can be found in the back pages of this account.

All of us can remember some incident, especially if children were involved, that remains in our minds and will forever seem like it happened only yesterday.

"LOOKING UNTO JESUS, THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH..." (HEBREWS 12:2).

For the next seven years, 1955-1962, the church steadily grew and maintained a close fellowship and deep dedication to the task God had set before them. Very few "events," in the true sense of the word, took place during these years; however, this does not mean that great things were not happening. Each organization was maintaining a good enrollment and attendance with new groups being established, the church membership grew from 193 to 283, and the church budget increased from $9914 to $11,975.00.

In October 1955, Rev. Frank Marks who was then pastor of Hilliard Memorial Baptist Church in High Point, came to lead in the fall revival. The week before revival services began, cottage prayer meetings were held in individual homes each evening. After the week of special cottage meetings was ended, the records show that **272** had attended--a record in anyone's book!

On November 20, 1955 the church voted to build partitions in three large assembly rooms downstairs to provide much-needed classroom space due to church growth.

Until July 29, 1956, the parsonage had never been painted on the inside, so by now it was desperately in need of attention. Jess Rowe, a friend and neighbor of the church, agreed to paint the parsonage at a cost of $60.00 labor and $30.00 for the paint. Upon completion of his fine work, the interior of the parsonage took on new life. An open house was held on August 25 to allow everyone to see the transformation that had been made.

Feeling that more land was needed for future building, the church family purchased a lot fronting South Main Street measuring 25 ft. x 62 ft.

11 inches from Foy Katen whose property it adjoined. The purchase was made at a cost of $500, ten percent of which Mr. Katen returned to the church as a gift.

The Girl's Auxiliary program was active and involved twenty girls in the year 1959. The "Forward Steps" emphasis was being promoted during these years where the girls reached various levels of achievement after completing numerous requirements in scripture memorization and mission work. On May 10, 1959, the first G.A. Coronation was held. Misses Jo Sadler, Becky Hicks, and Susan Beck were crowned "queens," a great achievement in G.A. studies. Again on May 15, 1960, Miss Beth Beck received her G. A. crown. It was every G.A.'s dream to at least reach the level of "Queen" and , perhaps, even further. On August 26, 1962, Jo Sadler (Watson) was awarded her "Queen Regent" award during the morning worship hour. Jo was the first and only "Queen Regent" our church has had.

Another significant achievement by a young person was the winning of the state Junior Memory Work Tournament at Caswell Assembly by Miss Pat McCrary (Larson) in 1960. This award was presented to the participant statewide who could recite the most scripture verses and references, given either one, by memory. Once again, this was a "one and only" achievement by a Coggins young person.

Two other events of some significance was our church's participation in the community-wide Christian survey on April 2-3, 1960. This was a massive undertaking by the Lexington Ministerial Association for the purpose of canvassing local neighborhoods and gathering complete information on each house and family, including their church preference. The other event mentioned was the purchase of one hundred twenty Baptist Hymnals at a cost of $220.00. Up until this time, the congregation had been singing out of the old Broadman Hymnals which were now tattered and worn. The purchase of new hymnals added a special touch to the spirit of worship and were enjoyed for many years.

One could not conclude the first years of the church's history without mentioning the famous "Sweetheart Banquets" held each February for the young people. Usually planned by Mrs. Polly Rollins and assisted by her Intermediate leaders, these banquets proved to be a highlight for the youth. Great meals, beautifully-planned programs and decorations, and fun-filled evenings where "love was the theme" are indicative of these

occasions. Possibly the high point of each was reached whenever it was time for such youth leaders as Ruth McCrary to be sung to by her husband, Coy. Upon his own admission, he "couldn't carry a tune in a bucket," but nonetheless he proceeded to serenade her with "You Are My Sunshine" without hesitation despite the laughter of youth and adults alike. The McCrarys, however, were not the only ones who were privileged to such antics. Many youth leaders including the Kenneth Rowes, the Leonard Rollins (possibly the most entertaining of all!), and the Conrad Lyons and others were subjected to this annual singing event. All these "sweethearts" stole the show with their heart-rending renditions. "Sweetheart banquets" were indeed Polly's specialty!

THE ROLLINS' YEARS COME TO AN END

"And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" (I Thes. 5:12-13).

It was with great sadness and regret that the church accepted the resignation of Leonard Rollins on Sunday, March 15, 1963; however, Rev. Rollins had accepted the call to become the Liberty Baptist Associations's Director of Missions. He had led so humbly and faithfully, making many personal and financial sacrifices. Finances were tight during those lean, formative years of the church, and he often had to visit homes individually in order to pick up church contributions from those who had missed church on the previous Sunday so that expenses could be met. Rev. Rollins, in his usual solem and drily humorous manner, says, **"I couldn't let you raise my salary because it was almost killing me to try to raise what you had already promised to pay me!"**

The evidence of the powerful way in which God had used this wonderful man has been stated on the previous pages as we watched a small chapel grow into a thriving and productive church. Many were being added each year to the membership--during 1956 twenty-one people had been added in just three months. The church was losing a compassionate and hard-working pastor and a dear and gracious pastor's wife, but we were fortunate in having them remain in the area to not only work with our church but forty other churches in the association as well. Rev. Rollins reflects

on his pastorate in this manner:

> During the years I served as pastor, there were disappointments, heartaches, times of joy and gladness, failures, mistakes, defeats, and victories; but through it all, Polly and I served to the best of our abilities and were convinced that we were in the place where God wanted us to be. I resigned in order to accept the position of associational missionary for Liberty Baptist Association and finished my ministry at Coggins Memorial on Sunday, March 10, 1963. It is hard to try to pour more than a decade of life and experiences into these few words, but a part of me and of my family will always be here with you.

AN ERA OF "GOLDEN" FINANCIAL YEARS

"And brought in the offerings and the tithes, and the dedication things faithfully..." (II Chron. 31:12).

Upon the resignation of Rev. Rollins, a pulpit committee was immediately organized for the purpose of finding the right man to serve as our next pastor. In the meantime, Rev. E. C. Roach was called as interim pastor on March 17, 1963 and served until November 24, 1963. His daughter, Pauline, was a member of our church at the time.

Rev. Richard Chapman, pastor of the Forest Hills Baptist Church in Burgaw, N. C., was called as pastor on December 22, 1963. At the time of his coming, our church membership was 284 and our total budget was $11,795.00. All organizations had met faithfully during the eleven months without a pastor, and the deacons had served diligently in seeing that the church kept to its ministry. Rev. Chapman assumed his pastorate on January 29, 1964. He and his wife, Myra, and their son, Steve, were welcomed warmly and with great anticipation. God was continuing to work with this church and the members were ready to do his will under Rev. Chapman's leadership. The Chapman's daughter, Crystal, was born during their early days at Coggins.

Knowing that God blesses ministers with many different strengths and talents, it quickly became evident that Rev. Chapman was a powerful preacher and an excellent administrator. His dynamic sermons and his emphasis on tithing precipitated a period of faithful stewardship by a large portion of the church membership which enabled us to make great

strides in paying off the debts that had occurred during the recent building program.

The first note-burning ceremony was held on Homecoming Day, August 2, 1964, leaving the church with only one note left in order to become debt-free. A condensed version of highlights of our history was presented in short booklet form to the congregation on this special occasion. Even though brief, this was the first printed history of Coggins Memorial to be presented to the people.

On Homecoming Day, August 1, 1965, the note the church had been paying since February 24, 1953 was burned--three years before the actual payoff date was due. Trustees Coy McCrary and Handy Byrd burned the note as Rev. Chapman and Rev. Rollins held the plate. Under Rev. Chapman's leadership, double payments had been made as often as possible so that the final note could be paid on June 21, 1965 and the church could look toward future plans.

During his pastorate, Rev. Chapman initiated Tuesday evening youth recreation periods at the church. They proved to be a great attraction as our young people participated in ping-pong, softball, relays, and other outdoor activities during the summer months.

The old Coggins homeplace had served faithfully for sixteen years as first a chapel and then a parsonage; however, age had taken its toil and made it necessary for us to begin looking elsewhere for living quarters for the pastor and his family. On August 22, 1965, a loan of $14,000 was secured for the purchase of a house at 10 Harrington Avenue, directly beside the church, from Mr. and Mrs. John (Buck) Pinyon. The Pinyons were members of Coggins and were preparing to move to Virginia. The loan was secured by placing a lien on the old parsonage as well as the new one. Necessary repairs were made on the new house and the deal was closed on September 2, 1965. The total cost of the parsonage, repairs, and selling price was $18,500.00. On September 26, the church sold the old Coggins homeplace and property on South Main to Bill Fox and Jack Link at a cost of $10,500.00. During this time, a $1000 special gift from the Mary Coggins' estate was presented to the church from her heirs.

At a December 19, 1965 business conference, the church voted to raise the pastor's salary from $85.00 to $100.00 per week for a total annual

salary of $5200.00. This was only the second salary increase for a Coggins pastor in the history of the church, not a matter of which to be particularly proud. It was voted to periodically re-evaluate the pastor's salary each time the industrial plants in town gave raises. However, on October 8, 1967, this motion was stricken from the record.

Evidence of Richard Chapman's administrative abilities was the "outstanding" rating he received in a "Better Minutes Contest" in 1966 while serving as clerk for the Liberty Baptist Association. He also served as president of the Lexington Ministerial Association during this time as well.

Feeling the need to make Coggins Memorial a more inviting and beautiful place in which to worship, the men completely tiled the basement floor of the building as well as extensively remodeled the sanctuary. This work was begun on June 20, 1966. Wood panelling was placed over the old, peeling, encrusted cement block wall, new ceiling tiles were installed, the sanctuary was carpeted with lovely burgundy carpeting, and new modern lighting was installed. New baptistry curtains were made by Lois and Phyllis Beck, Rita Hobbs, and Linda Everhart. These were made of the same burgundy-colored material as the carpet. The final results of all this hard work was a truly lovely sanctuary whose furnishings contributed to a more reverent and worshipful atmosphere.

On June 5, 1966, the note on the parsonage was burned leaving only one note remaining on the church. This was the loan that had been taken out for the remodeling of the sanctuary and basement. Even that, however, was paid off and burned on Rev. Chapman's third anniversary with Coggins in January 1967. Individual church offering envelopes were provided for each church member for the first time during 1966, and members were urged to tithe and continue supporting the church financially.

Two incidents of interest that took place in 1967 seem, in retrospect, to have been mistakes. At the time, however, the decisions must certainly have appeared to be logical ones. One incident was the offer from First Baptist Church to sell their old sanctuary organ to us due to the purchase of a new instrument for their church. The church family, however, decided not to take advantage of this offer, and to the present date, we still have never owned an organ for the sanctuary. The other incident is perhaps

more far-reaching and consequential than the other. A motion was made from the pastor and deacons that they negotiate with the Fitzgerald estate for six lots of land directly behind the church. Despite the recommendation, it was voted during church conference to table this item. Through the years, we have come to realize our mistakes in not buying the property when it became available. It is now the site of the Davidson Electric Corporation complex. Our present situation of being "bottled in" between residential housing and small businesses leaves us no room for expansion--a problem that might have been partially eliminated had we foreseen the current problems.

A much-needed new roof was put on the church in 1967 at a cost of $750.00. Another purchase which was a real delight to the congregation, especially to the church pianist and choir director, was the beautiful new baby grand piano bought at a cost of $1,236.00. It was a tremendous improvement over the old upright which had been used for so many years and was enjoyed during worship services as the congregation listened to the beautiful and talented playing of the church pianist, Carolyn McPherson, who had served in this position since a young adolescent.

RICHARD CHAPMAN RESIGNS

On March 20, 1968, Rev. Chapman recommended to the deacon board that a three-member "Personnel Committee" be established to supervise the hiring and firing of all church employees other than the pastor. At this time, the only other employee was the janitor. This committee consisted of Raymond Byrd (chairman of the deacons), Dan Bowman, and Sammy Allred.

Several improvements were made during the year consisting of the purchase of one hundred forty maroon-backed Baptist Hymnals to replace the much-worn old Broadman hymnals. Also, Jerry Stiers, Wayne Vuncannon, and George Hicks built fifteen beautiful lecterns for use in all Sunday School classrooms.

On July 23, 1968, Rev. Chapman resigned his pastorate. He did so in order to move to Kokomo, Indiana to become pastor of the Walton Baptist Church in accordance with the "Project 500" Home Mission Board program.

This was a program whereby the goal was to establish five hundred new churches in the United States within a two-year period. During the productive four and one-half years of his pastorate, our financial contributions doubled, our missions giving tripled, the church had retired a total of $25,000 in debts, a parsonage had been purchased and paid for, the church building had been totally renovated, and a beautiful baby grand piano had been purchased for the sanctuary. More importantly, 145 members had been added to the church roll which gave us a membership of 364.

Rev. Richard Chapman died on May 22, 1987 after months of suffering due to brain cancer. He was living in Moore, South Carolina and was serving as pastor of the Poplar Springs Baptist Church.

As one reflects over the past few years, one has to admit that troubles had occurred and differences of opinion had caused division within the church. This was due in part to personality conflicts and disagreements over church policy. Even though some had left the church during this period, we realized that God had great things in mind for us as we once again began the search for His man.

COGGINS BEGINS "MOVING FOR THE MASTER"

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14).

On August 11, 1968, a pulpit committee consisting of Carlene Call, Lois Beck, Horace Hill, Lionel Wall and Coy McCrary as chairman, was elected. Rev. Horace Barefoot was called as interim pastor and served for ten months.

Homecoming was held on August 4, 1968 with Dr. Jack Stanton as guest minister. Dr. Stanton had been involved in the Davidson County Crusade for Christ at the fairgrounds the preceding week. We felt very fortunate to have him deliver the morning message and the Lexington Men of Song to provide special music for this lovely seventeenth anniversary of our church.

We should also note that during 1968, we had an unbelievable total of twenty young men from our fellowship who were serving in the Armed Forces due to the Vietnam conflict which was taking place at the time. Another notable event was the ordination of Dan Bowman and Jerry Stiers as deacons on October 27, 1968.

We entered 1969 without a pastor, but under the able leadership of Rev. Barefoot. On January 12, the church voted to install a gas furnace at a cost of $1,100. We installed air conditioning in the sanctuary as well at a cost of $5,500. David Kephart, one of our most talented builders and workmen, built a beautiful lectern to be used in the sanctuary along with the pulpit lectern. Our music director during this time was Foster Call, church treasurer was Ruth McCrary (who served in that position for a total of seventeen years), Sunday School director was Ken Rowe, WMU director was Shirley Swing, and church pianist was Carolyn McPherson. We participated in "The Crusade of the Americas" in April as a part of the Project 500 simultaneous revival effort.

On July 1, 1969, Rev. Dearl Linwood Bunce accepted the call as pastor. He was in his final year's study at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N. C. and was serving as pastor of the Crestwood Baptist Church in Smithfield. With the arrival of a new pastor, Rev. Barefoot's interim ministry with us was over, and he was presented a love gift in the form of a two-piece luggage set.

The Bunce family moved to Lexington to begin an exciting new ministry. Rev. Bunce and his wife, Betty, had three children: Linwood, Graham, and Beth. The Bunces immediately set to work to establish new programs and interject new energy into our fellowship. Rev. Bunce and Betty had been blessed with the gift of knowing how to generate enthusiasm and excitement for the Lord's work. Our people were impressed and sometimes in awe of their limitless energy and innovative ideas which made 1969 a year of "firsts."

One of the "firsts" was the beginning of a monthly newsletter which would serve the purpose of keeping our church family informed of all activities and "happenings" within the fellowship. The youth department, led by Betty Bunce, met on September 1, 1969, for an organizational

meeting to establish a publishing staff for the newly-formed Youth Crier. Eighteen eager, excited young people met and wrote articles and decided what they wanted the newsletter to be and how it should be written. This newsletter became a permanent publication and has been appreciated through the years by our membership and friends.

Another "first" took place in September when the pastor and deacons felt the need for a special Sunday School class for the new converts and members who were joining regularly. Therefore, the "New Members Class" was established and was taught by Coy McCrary. It proved to be a meaningful and effective tool whereby young Christians were taught the basic beliefs and thus aided in their Christian development.

During the establishment of the Youth Crier, another "first" occurred--the hiring of a part-time church secretary. Miss Margaret McCrary (Byrd) was employed by the church at a salary of $25.00 per week and began work in the pastor's study in the parsonage since there was no church office at this time.

In November, the very first church directory was published. Once again, this was a novel idea for Coggins. The directory included the church membership roll with addresses and phone numbers, all organizational officers and teachers, and the church budget among many other things. Through the years, our directories have become invaluable tools for keeping us involved and informed.

On December 14, the first "candlelight service" was held in celebration of the Christmas season. Although our church always had lovely church dramas and programs, the candlelight service led by the young people was a unique and meaningful new addition to our worship experiences.

The year 1969 was a year of implementing new ideas, beginning new programs, and envisioning things for the years ahead. God had so many exciting adventures before us in which our church would be ministering in ways we could not foresee at this time.

Statistically, the receipts for the year were $25,000; the pastor's salary was $6600; the expenditures were $18,581.52; Sunday School enrollment was 57. One man, Wayne VunCannon, was ordained as a deacon on

October 19, and Paul Mason was ordained as a minister at Eldorado Baptist Church where he became fulltime pastor.

WE ENTER THE "SENSATIONAL SEVENTIES"

We voted in 1970 to publish a "pictorial church directory" which included family portraits of church families who agreed to participate. This was done in an effort to make our people better known to each other and as an aid to the many newly-joining members and converts who were as yet unacquainted with many of our people. It was a great success which would be repeated in the future.

Rev. Bunce suggested that a "pastor's suggestion box" be placed in the church in order to give the congregation an outlet for their ideas, suggestions, complaints, sermon topics, etc. Our membership took advantage of this new idea for a time and contributed many "interesting" suggestions to the pastor.

In an effort to continue moving forward and striving to be the church and leaders God would have us be, the pastor, deacons, church council, and nominating committee recommended that we establish a set of guidelines to be given to any member asked to serve in a leadership capacity of the church. This was done in an effort to emphasize the importance of each volunteer place of service and to ensure that a commitment would be made by each officer and teacher.

New overhead lights were installed in the sanctuary at a cost of $350.00 and were a great improvement over the existing ones. A new carport and utility building were added to the parsonage at a cost of $1300.00.

Feeling the need for our people to be better informed of statewide Southern Baptist activities and issues, the membership voted to send The Biblical Recorder, our state Baptist newspaper, to each church family who desired it. This was done free of charge to the members and was paid for at a special family rate by the church. This new idea began with seventy-five families participating.

On July 12, 1969, our deacons and pastor felt the need to establish a "church constitution" which would be adhered to concerning committees, church policy, deacon election, etc. A committee was appointed on July 12, 1969 and consisted of David Kephart, Lois Beck, Foster Call, Lee Hill Sr., and Lena Carrick. They worked many long and hard hours in perfecting the wording and ideas presented in this most important church document. After completing their work, the Constitution was presented during church conference and was unanimously approved. Copies of the Constitution were then printed and are, to this day, given to each new church family as they join.

"MOVING FOR THE MASTER" GETS WHEELS!

With the prospects of great things to come, the church voted to purchase its first mode of transportation--a church bus! The bus was bought in 1970 at a cost of $3,417.00 and was painted yellow and blue. It proudly carried the bold motto "Moving For the Master" printed on the front and back. This was the beginning of a tremendous new ministry which enabled us to bring many children and adults to both the Sunday and Wednesday services. These were unchurched children and adults for the most part who would not otherwise have been reached. Many new members were added and children were won to Christ. Many of the children came from broken homes, unwashed, and raggedly dressed; but our people took them under their wings and loved them and even provided a comb, shampoo and soap, and whatever else was needed.

Vacation Bible School in 1970 was the beginning of a steady increase in both emphasis and attendance. Lois Beck served as VBS principal and directed us to a total enrollment of 245 that summer. This was more than any other church in the Liberty Association other than First Baptist.

We rejoiced at the eighteen baptisms and eleven other additions during 1970 which made our total membership 372. We gave a total of $3,977.75 to missions efforts and were appreciative of the fact that at the end of the church year we were free of debt with the value of all church property totaling $85,000.00.

A "SPARK" IGNITES

Many extremely significant events were destined to take place during 1971 to mark it as one of the most productive years in our church's twenty-year history.

Wayne VunCannon, licensed minister and member of our church, felt a great burden for those in prison in the local Davidson County minimum-security facility. He started a jail ministry with these men and faithfully met with them each week as he shared Christ's love and forgiveness and witnessed to many troubled men. Eleven of these men accepted Christ during Wayne's involvement there.

Coggins Memorial went on record in 1971 as being strongly opposed to the establishment of ABC stores in Lexington and made a monetary donation to aid in defeating this measure. The referendum was eventually defeated.

During Youth Week in March, our young people participated in a youth-led evangelism crusade at our church. This was a weekend affair led by the thirty-five voice youth choir from East Taylorsville. This dedicated group of youth shared with our young people in both testimony and song and instilled within them a greater desire to be used of God. The weekend events also showed our youth how exciting it can be following and witnessing for Christ. As a result of this very special weekend, our youth and Betty Bunce organized a touring youth choir for all ages twelve and older who were eventually called "The Sparks." This followed many months of soul-searching, recommitment, training, and musical development on the part of our youth division. It was a milestone in our history as far as youth ministry was concerned. Never had we seen a group of youngsters so dedicated and "sold out" to the cause of Christ. This group was inspired by God and was led so very lovingly and unselfishly by Betty Bunce who not only opened her heart, but also her home, to this group of youth.

Under her leadership, the group grew to a membership of forty talented and eager "Sparks" who traveled all across North Carolina, visiting

in a great number of churches and sharing through music and testimony. This writer was fortunate to be one of the "Sparks" and remembers it as one of the most significant and meaningful periods in her life. The spirit that pervaded the group was one of complete love, total honesty and sharing, and an all-encompassing desire to serve God as a witness. The trips taken with this group were growing experiences both spiritually and emotionally and are weekends that will never be forgotten. Friendships were made during these years that time itself can never diminish and distances can never sever.

The Sparks continued their ministry in a big way as they began preparations to produce a record album titled "The Sparks Pass It On." The money for this project had been donated by a private source; therefore, at no expense to the church, the Sparks met on Saturday, January 15, 1972 and spent a grueling thirteen and one-half hours recording an album of Christian music. Mr. Joe Clawson was our "man behind the scenes" as he not only made the arrangements for the recording session but also helped design the cover of the album and directed the recording session itself. His work was invaluable to this undertaking. The album was a tremendous success and was sold by the youth choir as they ministered in churches throughout the area. This was not a profit-making venture, but a means of sharing Christ with others. All proceeds were used for traveling expenses, music purchases, etc. An untold number of records were given as gifts to church members, shut-ins, and other individuals. To this day, we often hear how this record ministers and touches lives. One lady related that when she begins to feel depressed or discouraged, her best medicine is to put on "The Sparks" recording, sit back, and praise God for His goodness! This in itself is a tribute to the efforts of these young people. As a matter of interest, we will note that out of "The Sparks," two are now ministers of the gospel, one is a minister of education, and one is a minister of music. Others have entered honorable professions where they are daily witnesses. True to their theme song, the Sparks learned to "Pass It On" then, and they continue to do so even now.

WE CONTINUE TO BUILD

On April 4, 1971, we voted to employ Margaret Byrd as fulltime church secretary at a salary of $55.00 per week for a 32-hour work week. To ensure her safety and that of the church janitor, the church voted to begin locking the doors when the building was not in use. This was also due to the increased number of break-ins taking place at that time. We voted to establish a "Minister's Fund" which would allow us to automatically give $100.00 to any member entering the ministry and attending seminary. Drapes were bought for the windows in the side rooms off the sanctuary at a cost of $225.00 to add to the over-all improved appearance of the sanctuary building.

One of the most important church conferences held since our inception took place on August 25, 1971. It was during this meeting that Coggins voted to authorize a Building Committee consisting of David Kephart, Shirley Swing, Foster Call, John Pearce, Troy Bulla, and Lois Beck to have plans drawn, obtain bids, etc. for an educational facility approximately 55' x 90'. On November 21, the Committee drew up a proposed recommendation and decided to mail a copy to all church members, to read the recommendation on Wednesday night, and then to give all those present a copy of this recommendation. They also announced a special business meeting on November 28 for the purpose of voting on their recommendations. Plans of the proposed building were posted on two bulletin boards for inspection by our people.

During the November 28 meeting, Chairman David Kephart read the recommendation and made the motion that it be accepted. Horace Hill seconded the motion. It read as follows:

1. The church adopt the plans as drawn up by W. O. Beck.
2. The church accept the bid from Triangle Construction for $75,985.00 with an additional cost of $1200-1500 for the purchase of furnishings.
3. The church borrow the money, $57,500, at a rate of 7½% interest for a period of 10 years.
4. The pastor and committee be allowed to plan a ground-breaking ceremony to be held at the close of the morning worship on December 5, 1971.

The congregation then voted by secret ballot and the deacons were asked to count them. Foster Call, deacon chairman, reported that

ninety-eight voted in favor of the recommendation and only three had voted against it. The church had spoken--God was blessing, we were expanding, and it was time to build again.

THE YEAR PROVES PROSPEROUS

Besides the new building program being launched, the new church year seemed to mark the beginning of a renewed spirit of love and concern among our people and stretched out within the community. In an effort to reach out and minister to our shut-ins, the Homebound Ministry expanded to include a committee of willing and loving workers who faithfully visited each week in the homes of shut-ins and took them a tape recorder and cassette copy of the morning worship from the preceding Sunday. Lena Carrick, Ellen Kephart, Lionel Wall, and many others participated in this ministry. Our homebound members and friends eagerly awaited the visit from their "homebound minister" each week.

Fellowship Bible study groups were being formed as the need and desire arose. One group of ladies decided that Tuesday morning was the best time for concentrated Bible study, so they began a "Tuesday morning ladies group." This was the first fellowship Bible study group formed, and they faithfully met each Tuesday morning. To this day, these ladies still enjoy this fellowship together as members come and go throughout the years.

Because of the large number of new members during 1971, a New Member Reception was held on May 9, 1971 to honor and welcome **eighty-seven** brand new faces to our fellowship. Approximately one hundred people attended the reception which was a first of its kind at Coggins. At the end of 1971, our total church membership was **448. Eighty-seven new members in one year**--what a wonderful year it had been!

It was also in 1971 that the church family, upon the recommendation from the diaconate, voted to change our Homecoming from the first Sunday in August to the second Sunday in October. This date was later changed again.

Our first "Mothers-of-the-Year" were selected on Mother's Day 1971. The Family Life Ministries Committee voted to honor two mothers for their achievements and accomplishments in their home, job setting, and church activities. Mrs. Ellen Stiers, one of our most beloved charter members, Sunday School teacher, and church leader who was still active in her eighties, was chosen as "Older Mother of the Year." Mrs. Shirley Swing, another dedicated and committed member who had served as Sunday School teacher, youth leader, and active participant in all phases of church life, was chosen as the "Younger Mother of the Year."

During 1971 we added forty-two new members through baptism and forty-five members by letter or statement. With the membership increasing this dramatically in a year's time, it was deemed necessary to add another deacon to our diaconate. When this deacon was added, a new ministry--The Deacon Family Ministry--began. This was a plan which provided for each deacon to be assigned an average of fifteen families within the membership for which they would be responsible. It was an attempt to bring our diaconate and church families in closer contact where ideas could be shared, complaints aired, and concerns made known. The deacons were also asked to keep in touch with their families and be available in case of death or sickness. This was not to take the place of the pastor's role, but was to simply be an extension of his ministry.

Vacation Bible School, as usual, was a big affair as we added yet another group to this summer program. The first "FVBS"--Family Vacation Bible School--was started in an effort to reach unchurched adults as well as our own people who were not serving on the VBS faculty. The teachers for this new group were Coy McCrary and Foster Call. It was a tremendous success with twenty adults attending these original sessions.

Two men were ordained as deacons during the year. Buster Patterson and Don Leonard were ordained on September 19, 1971. Two other men in our fellowship were awaiting ordination into the gospel ministry during this year--Wayne VunCannon and Raymond Byrd.

Our Sunday School enjoyed a record attendance of 252 on November 7, 1971.

Church officers were Horace Hill, Sunday School director; Larry Ward, Training Union director; Ken Coleman, Brotherhood; Sarah Styers, WMU; Foster Call, deacon chairman; and Margaret Byrd, church pianist.

The bus ministry was very active during 1971 and our one church bus was filled to capacity weekly. With the bus being driven so frequently and over so many miles, the gas and oil bills could have been astronomical. They were not, however, due to the gracious generosity of Jack Whitehead who provided all the gas and oil for this ministry.

We were privileged to have Rev. Mark Corts to lead in an Evangelistic Crusade on November 4-7. He was a dynamic evangelist and a talented musician who won our hearts as he shared with us. An interesting note concern Rev. Corts is that each evening he would ask someone from the congregation to give him one statement of personal testimony. He would then sit down at the piano, take that one line of testimony, and compose a song from it. It was a unique talent which captivated the congregation each evening.

With our church program being consistently active,new ventures beginning, and the church office producing great quantities of work each week, we were blessed to have two members who donated innumerable hours of labor and materials at their own personal expense to provide special advertisement printings, weekly bulletins, posters, etc. The services of Arlene Allred and Sammy Allred provided through these years were invaluable.

Despite the many exciting things taking place during this eventful church year, the highlight of 1971 had to be the official Groundbreaking Ceremony held on December 5 for the new educational building. This building was to house a large fellowship hall, kitchen, office, children and preschool rooms which would meet state daycare requirements, large foyer and two bathrooms. With the removal of the first shovelful of dirt, we were on our way. There were expectant days ahead!

THE MINISTRY GROWS AND REACHES OUT

As we see so many times in other church and within the history of our own, building programs tend to promote church growth and attendance.

Such was the case as we began 1972 and the bulldozers began clearing ground for the educational building. The sanctuary was overflowing each week and all Sunday School classrooms were filled to capacity, making it necessary for two classes to begin meeting in the parsonage. Chairs were brought in each Sunday morning for worship service and placed on the outside of the aisles due to crowded conditions. It was wonderful to behold and an inspiration to do even greater things.

Eight new fellowship Bible study groups had begun and were meeting regularly. A new program called "Quest for Discipleship" started on January 2, 1972 in an effort to make better disciples of us all. This program was directed by Larry Ward, and Buddy Kerley was assistant director. It began meeting on Sunday nights at 8:00 p.m. immediately following the evening worship. According to the church newsletter, it was "an historic step in methods of training."

It was our privilege on January 30, 1972 to welcome twelve children from Mills Home in Thomasville into our own homes for a Sunday filled with fun, fellowship, and worship. For some of these children it was the first time in a great while that they had been able to experience a family setting, so their Sunday dinner in their host homes was especially meaningful to both them and the hosts.

Sports have always been an important part of our fellowship, and we have a hallful of trophies to prove it! This year our boys won the City Church League basketball playoffs by beating First Methodist. Our Young Adult Softball league won the season trophy by beating Lutheran-Reformed-Catholic by a score of 11 to 1, and the playoff championship was also won by them as they beat First Baptist 11 to 2. Coggins wons its first blue ribbon at a State Royal Ambassador Track Meet at Gardner-Webb College on May 19. Robert McCrary took first place in this annual event.

THE TRINIDAD CRUSADE

On February 2, 1972, the church voted in special conference to support Rev. Bunce and Betty in a ten-day mission tour to Trinidad. Rev. Bunce explained their purpose thusly:

> Reginald Hill, missionary to Trinidad, says that we, along with some 30-40 other Southern Baptist pastors and music leaders, will be assigned to a specific church on the island where we will conduct an 8-day evangelistic campaign and work with a native pastor, conducting classes during the day and holding services at night. We will participate in baptismal services, visits to prisons, schools, and the leper colony where we hope to conduct services. Street services have also been planned in some areas. We will be among different races and will find many Hindus, Seventh Day Adventists, Catholics, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslim, and other cults. There will also be a brief visit to Venezuela where we will have an opportunity to view some of our Southern Baptist mission projects.

The dates of the mission were March 13-23, and our people gladly supported the tour by voting to pay the $500.00 expenses involved.

The Bunces returned and presented an informative and inspiring program of slides and personal testimony on April 9. A total of thirteen hundred decisions were made for Christ, and due to the shortage of Bibles in that area, we voted to send one hundred Bibles to Trinidad for these new Christians. In addition and because of the great need among the people, we sent two boxes of sheets, pillowcases, towels, washcloths, dishes, ladies clothes, an iron, and a VBS offering of $91.56 to Rev. Josephine Placide, the leader of the Mount Elvin Baptist Church in Trinidad.

Not only did we participate in the Trinidad Crusade, but we also sponsored a School of Missions on October 29, 1972 which involved four nights of services with a different missionary speaker each night. Our guest missionary for whom we provided housing was Rev. Kwang Wah Lau, pastor of the Chinese Baptist Church in Miami, Florida.

For the first time, we combined all Southern Baptist offerings which were ordinarily emphasized at various times during the year and promoted one large offering in November and December called "World Missions Offering." The church felt this emphasis on a general missions offering could be more effective than eight or nine other offerings. This feeling seemed to be confirmed when the total offering amounted to $3,737.53. This was then divided among all Southern Baptist missions

efforts and sent to the Convention. The main thrust of this effort was to encourage people to give at least one week's salary out of a year to missions.

CHILDREN ARE IMPORTANT AT COGGINS

God was continuing to bless the church through our ministry to children of all ages. The bus was filled to capacity, our classrooms were overflowing, and we were averaging approximately fifty children per week. Therefore, the church voted on February 6, 1972 to purchase another church bus in order to expand this ministry. The church was unanimously in favor, the bus was purchased and paid for, and the children came pouring in each week. During this time our average Sunday School attendance was 218 and our Wednesday evening program averaged 150 weekly.

Seeing the great potential for these children and identifying the need to provide age-level worship for them, the church voted on May 14, 1972 to begin Children's Worship for ages eleven and under each Sunday morning during the 11:00 a.m. worship hour. This was a tremendously successful program and was led by many capable children's workers and deacons. The Children's Worship hours were conducted much like the adult worship complete with taking an offering, having a sermon, singing hymns, and otherwise providing worship on a child's level of understanding.

Vacation Bible School has always been a major emphasis and this year was no exception as for the first time we decided to have two weeks of VBS--one in July and another in August. Both weeks were great successes as we enrolled 555 during July and 650 in August with a faculty of 70. On the Sunday following VBS, we had a total attendance of 312 in Sunday School with four buses running and bringing in 204 children and youth.

EDUCATIONAL BUILDING IS COMPLETED

Even before the completion of the new educational facility, the church had been conducting classes in it. This was an inconvenience to

the contractors, but it was a necessity in order to house all the children and youth who were attending weekly. The work was coming along very slowly; however, plans were finally begun to have a special ceremony in dedication of the completed building. The church family voted to have a combined Homecoming Day and Dedication Day on October 8, 1972. The guest speakers for this historic event were Rev. Leonard Rollins and Rev. Richard Chapman. Special music was provided by the Sanctuary and Youth choirs.

Johnny and Paulette Morgan, parents of Annette Morgan, had a desire to remember their daughter in a very unique manner. Little Annette had died in February 1971 due to a congential heart defect, and in her memory, the Morgans furnished one of the new classrooms in the educational building which would house the four and five year old preschoolers--the group Annette would have been a part of had she lived. A brass memorial plaque was placed on the door of the classroom signifying this special memorial.

Other special events of the church year included the deacon ordination of Jack Byrd on October 22, the ordination of Wayne VunCannon into the gospel ministry on November 26, and the recognition of Nancy Leonard and Mrs. J. W. Dickens as "Mothers of the Year." On May 14, the church voted to build and install a paneled wall in front of the choir loft to replace the old curtains previously being used. David Kephart, J. W. Carrick, and Foster Call were in charge of the project and provided a beautiful addition to the sanctuary.

A "first" this year was the writing and production of a play by our pastor, Dearl Bunce, entitled "Mr. Coggins Goes Around the World." This play was presented on December 23 by a cast of forty and was directed by Kaydene Dean, Pansy Wall, Shirley Swing, and Joe Clawson. The play dealt with missions and our participation in this effort around the world. Without a doubt, it was a great success.

During the year we had added sixty-five new members which included thirty-three baptisms and thirty-two by letter or statement. This now gave us a total of 500 members. Due to the increase in membership, two deacons were added. Our church budget for the year was $54,000. The building was now completed, and new days and opportunities were ahead.

ONE IN THE BOND OF LOVE

**"Finally, be ye all of one mind
having compassion one for another, love as brethren..."
(I Peter 3:8).**

These were such wonderful years in the life of Coggins Memorial as we experienced record growth, initiated new programs, and gained new visions for ministry throughout the community. There was an overwhelming spirit of love, the common bond that builds great churches and ties them together in ways that only God can make possible. Even the day-to-day ministry was met with excitement and expectation because the church family was seeing the evidence of God's power daily. These were years to be cherished and which provided memories that can never be stolen.

The year 1973 was not necessarily an eventful one, but the mission of the church continued and the fellowship remained strong. Two events, however, do stand out among the year's activities.

On February 11-16, the "Crusade for Christ" week of revival services was held here. This crusade was led by Rev. Jim Wilson, one of the most dynamic and sought-after evangelists of our day. The theme for the crusade was "Expect A Miracle" and was made significant in the fact that during the week's crusade, thirty-five people accepted Christ and scores of rededications were made. It also marked the beginning of a new course of weekly study called "The Deeper Spiritual Walk." Without a doubt, this crusade was one of the most memorable revival periods in our history.

The second event in 1973 was the beginning of "Outdoor Worship Services." The pastor and deacons felt the need to reach out within the community to unchurched families who possibly would not enter a church building. In an effort to go to them, the first in a series of outdoor worship services was begun on July 29, 1973 and continued for a six-week period. The first service was held in the Food Town parking lot on South Main Street and was attended by approximately 400 people. One of the most enticing aspects of the outdoor service was the theme

"Come As You Are, Sit In Your Car!" Special music by the Byrd Quartet, Sanctuary choir, a testimony by Tim Robbins, and a message from Rev. Bunce majoring on the compromises of modern America highlighted the first service. The choirs and pastor were situated on the flat bed of a large tractor-trailer, the piano and pianist were located in a pickup truck beside the platform, and large speakers were erected to provide sound. We all still remember how the evening's offering was collected from the cars--those large Kentucky Fried Chicken buckets are hard to forget! The climax of this first series of services was the "Youth Rally" led by Rev. Kenneth Hemphill and youth choirs from Rich Fork, Coggins, and First Baptist in Welcome. Fifty youth and adults rededicated their lives for Christ in an estimated crowd of five hundred. An average of one hundred cars were gathered each Sunday of the six-week series.

The name of the church newsletter was changed from The Youth Crier to Coggins Courier since the youth were now no longer publishing the monthly letter. A new pictorial directory was again provided due to the great increase in new members. And, speaking of pictures, "Big Picture Day" was held on April 29, 1973, as the entire church family gathered on the front steps and yard while a photographer stood atop our church bus across the street and took the picture. Each family was presented an 8 x 10 copy of this one and only "Big Picture."

Emilio Pagan, a member of the Nicky Cruz evangelistic team, was the guest speaker for our annual Youth Sunday on March 18 and shared his dramatic personal testimony.

Several individuals were recognized throughout the year for various reasons. Mrs. Judy Dickens and Mrs. Delkie Coppley were chosen as "Mothers of the Year," and Horace Hill was presented the "Father of the Year" plaque. Joe Clawson was ordained as a deacon on April 8, and Lee Hill, Jr. and Steve Richardson were ordained as deacons on October 1. Raymond Byrd was ordained into the gospel ministry on November 4, 1973, the second man from our church family to enter the ministry. Mrs. Ed Bell donated shrubbery for the front of the parsonage, and David and Nina Tesh planted it in an effort to beautify the parsonage landscape. New lighting for the sanctuary was bought and installed at a cost of $300.00

under the supervision of Jim Barger. Always keeping our children in mind, a new Preschool playground area was begun with the fencing being installed by Elvin Allen and Johnny Holder at material cost only.

The music ministry was growing in such a manner that the deacons felt a need to employ a fulltime minister of music. Betty Bunce was selected and voted on by the church on April 4, 1973 at a salary of $70.00 per week. She would be in charge of either directing each choir or seeing that directors were found and supervised in these programs.

Our twenty-second birthday was celebrated on Homecoming Day with guest speaker Dr. John Carlton, professor of preaching at Duke and Southeastern Seminary. We also hosted the Liberty Baptist Association annual meeting on September 26.

During this year we enjoyed the addition of **sixty-nine** new members--forty-nine through baptism and twenty through letter or statement. This was really not surprising since God never seemed to stop blessing our efforts to serve Him.

The last big highlight of the year was once again Vacation Bible School. This year we reached an unprecedented enrollment of **925** pupils and a faculty of **120** adults as well as using five buses to transport students to the school. It was one of the largest Vacation Bible Schools in the state and was recognized as such in many publications. Tents were donated by the National Guard and were set up in our parking lots so that classes could be held in them. This school brought many black children which caused some controversy throughout the neighborhood; however, it was the feeling of the church that "Jesus loves all the children of the world--red and yellow, black and white!"

A major effort during 1973 was our campaign again the "Liquor-By-the Drink" issue in Lexington. Coggins assumed a major role in seeing that this was defeated and many of our members participated in various ways. Carol Richardson spearheaded a group of twenty ladies who called everyone in our church's voting precinct to encourage them to vote against this issue. Don Leonard took voters to the polls when transportation was needed, and Lillian Hyatt called our own church members to make sure they voted. On November 4, 1973, "liquor-by-the-drink" was defeated much to the joy of our church family.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL MAKES 1974 AN HISTORIC YEAR

Anyone who has ever had the privilege of working in summer Vacation Bible School remembers what a tiring but rewarding experience it can be; however, there is no doubt that the **125 VBS workers** in the summer of 1974 will vividly treasure their memories.

VBS became a major focal point that year as we concentrated our efforts on reaching as many boys and girls, black and white, for Christ through this summer program. With huge tents once again erected in the parking lots, classrooms bulging, the parsonage filled with classes, and church buses galore in the parking lot, we welcomed **1025 boys and girls** to our school. It was two of the hardest but most exciting weeks we have experienced, and our efforts were noted all over the state. Not only did we have 1025 in our own school, but we also directed and conducted a mission VBS at Green Street Baptist Church in High Point with an attendance of **289** which actually made our summer VBS program total **1,315!** A highlight of our school was the beautiful VBS certificate we received with a picture of the entire VBS faculty and pupils on the front of it--and what a picture it was! Rev. Bunce wrote an article entitled "From Ninety to Nine Hundred" concerning our VBS growth and experiences which appeared in The Church Administration magazine of the Southern Baptist Convention. This was by far the largest Vacation Bible School of which we had been a part, and to this day we have not surpassed this 1974 school.

Revivals in 1974 were memorable ones. Rev. Melvin Green led during our spring revival which coincided with the Easter season. Our theme was "He Lives!" The fall revival was scheduled to be led by Rev. Jim Wilson, but due to the critical illness of his young daughter, he was unable to be with us for the first part of the week's services. Instead, Dr. Ross Rhoads, a dynamic evangelist in his own right, took Rev. Wilson's place and delivered the week's revival messages. However, on the weekend our revival was scheduled to end (which also happened to be our Homecoming Sunday), Rev. Wilson was able to come and lead in these two important events.

Our youth were active as usual, but they enjoyed one very special activity during the weekend of June 19-20. This was a retreat at Camp Caraway in Asheboro which was attended by **fifty-three** young people and leaders--a record for any youth event up to this time. Youth Week was highlighted on March 17 by a special service led entirely by the youth and a sermon preached by Robert McCrary, one of our young men who was studying for the ministry.

Due to the growth of our music program and the many activities it entailed, the church felt led to take some of the burden off Betty Bunce and hire another part-time music and youth worker. Mrs. June Landreth, who had recently joined our fellowship, accepted this position. She and Betty split the $70.00 per week salary. June served in this capacity until May 19, 1974 when she resigned to accept a teaching position in Catawba County.

Extensive remodeling of the parsonage took place in 1974. New carpeting, wallpaper, draperies, and beautiful textured ceilings crafted by Coy McCrary, made the parsonage once again a home of which we could be proud. The committee who worked so hard on these improvements consisted of Ken and Mary Coleman, Dan and Pat Larson, and Don Leonard. An Open House for the church family was held on December 29 which gave everyone an opportunity to see the work that had been completed.

Other physical improvements that year included the erection of a large 3'x6' cross and 10"x6" lettering on the South Main Street side of the building which was highlighted at night by a large spotlight. This was done at a cost of $376.00 and improved the looks of that side of the building, not to mention the fact that it helped tremendously in identifying the location of our facilities. Sanctuary choir robes were purchased at a cost of $35.00 each. Choir members for the most part bought their own robes with the help of other non-choir members.

After months of research and comprehensive study, the newly-written "Church Constitution" mentioned earlier was voted and approved on July 14, 1974. Copies were then made and distributed to our congregation several months later.

An additional deacon, Bill Brigman, was ordained on October 20, 1974 due to increasing growth of the church family.

Outdoor worship services resumed on June 30 through September 15 with the theme "God's Love--Something Wonderful." Once again they were held in the Food Town parking lot and were a great blessing as well as a tremendous success.

We were engaged at this time in a special ministry with the children from the Junior Order Home of Lexington. Our church bus picked up approximately thirty-five of their children weekly on Wednesday and Sundays and brought them to church for worship and fellowship. This was done with the approval and appreciation of the Junior Order Home staff because of the opportunities it provided for these children. Many of these youngsters accepted Christ and joined the church. They are still on our church rolls; however, it has been virtually impossible to keep current addresses and records on these young people due to their constant relocation.

Seeing the great need for daycare facilities on the south end of town, the church began researching the possibilities of beginning such a program at Coggins. However, after months of examination and consideration, the deacons voted to table this program due to a current lack of finances.

One of the "fun" things taking place during 1974 was the initiation of a church tennis team. Thirty-five men and women competed in an intramural tennis tournament directed by Larry Dean. There were doubles, singles, and mixed doubles competition with all winners receiving trophies.

Another year had come to a close and with it reflections of what had been accomplished and what had been left undone. We had added twenty-six members by baptism and twenty-five members by letter and statement. The church budget for the year had been met at $73,200.00, and we had received a World-Wide Missions offering totaling $3,233.49.

The year was to end on a sad note, however, as the church voted to accept the resignation of our pastor, Dearl Bunce, in order for him to accept the pastorate of the Bedford Baptist Church in Bedford, Virginia. The resignation was read and accepted on December 8 and was to become effective on January 26, 1975. During the Christmas program in December, the church family presented a love gift as well as a farewell gift in the form of a large color television. The new year of 1975 was to bring not only a new pastor, but, hopefully, new opportunities.

REFLECTIONS OF THE PAST...VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

Rev. Bunce, in his letter to the membership on December 17, 1974, had the following to say concerning his departure:

> My stay here has been both beneficial and rewarding to me. Only God knows what he has accomplished through our ministry here, but it's with a thankful and joyful heart that I come to this point in my ministry. Please remember who you are! You are God's people! Look to Him for divine leadership and he will never fail you. Few churches I know have demonstrated the capacity to allow God's Spirit to work through them as you have here at Coggins. Remember that each of you has a special place of service. This is a glorious labor of love in which we are involved. Wait patiently upon God and leave the results to Him. As God leads His man here who will serve as your next pastor, cooperate with him as you have me. God's work will not suffer. I would like to have you remember me not only as your former pastor, but also as your friend, one who walked among his people and will love them forever.

He further stated in our January 15, 1975 edition of the Courier that, **"The church of Jesus Christ is the 'highest, richest, most radiant, and mighty thing under God's heaven.' Let's focus our eyes on visions of the future and not reflections of the past as we begin a new year in Christ."** And so we began 1975.

Rev. Bunce preached his final sermon on January 19, 1975 at a special evening worship hour with the theme "Praising God" for his grace and goodness. It was a beautiful service with the "sweet, sweet Spirit" that was ever present in our fellowship.

A pulpit committee consisting of Arlene Allred, Naomi Fulbright, Nick Baker, Horace Hill, and Johnny Morgan was elected on January 5 and immediately began their search. In the meantime, Rev. Inman Stewart, the former pastor of Hasty Baptist Church, became our interim pastor on February 2 at a salary of $50.00 per week. Not only had we lost a pastor, but we had also lost a minister of music; therefore, on January 12, Paul Freeman was called to lead our sanctuary choir at a salary of $35.00 per week. Paul was then assistant band director at Lexington Senior High.

Even though we were once again without a pastor, the people remained faithful and supported their church. Regular activities continued, and

weekly programs flourished. Baby Dedication Day was held on April 27 and three beautiful babies were dedicated during the service. On that night, a special "Family Service" was held which included personal testimonies and special singing by family groups. Father's Day was celebrated on June 15 during which Coy McCrary, George Hicks, and Larry Dean were recognized as the "Fathers of the Year." The preschool playground was equipped to fully serve the needs of our "little ones," and the work was directed by Kaydene Dean, our preschool coordinator.

GOD SUPPLIES THE MAN

On July 20, 1975, the church met in conference and voted to call Rev. Jerry S. Laughter as pastor. Rev. Laughter was then assistant pastor and music director of Bethlehem Baptist Church in King's Mountain. He and his wife, Frances, had two young children--Kenny and Renee. According to the Courier edition on August 12, 1975:

> All of us here at Coggins are eagerly awaiting Sunday, August 31! What a very special day for Coggins as we welcome Rev. Jerry Laughter, Frances, and family into our fellowship. God has certainly answered our prayers in a mighty way! Rev. Laughter and Frances visited with our VBS on Tuesday night and shared with our various departments. The children fell in love with Rev. Laughter's winning smile and beautiful singing voice and with Frances' open friendliness and warmth. We can already see that God is going to bless us tremendously as the Laughter's arrive in Lexington.

With the arrival of a new pastor, all activities took on a new air of excitement. VBS was held for two non-consecutive weeks with a total of 674 enrolled and fifteen decisions for Christ. The Homecoming speaker was Rev. Wayne VunCannon, a former member and now pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Troy. On November 1, we participated in "Countdown 24"--a chain of prayer lasting from 6:00 a.m. on November 1 and concluding at 6:00 a.m. on November 2 in preparation for revival beginning on November 2. The women of the church met and prayed during the daylight hours, and the men came and prayed during the evening and late night hours so that the chain would not be broken. Revival services were led by Rev. Eugene Land, pastor of Second Baptist Church in King's Mountain.

We found it necessary at this time to pay a pianist to provide music for our worship services. This was due to our church pianist, Margaret Byrd, who was expecting her first child and would be unable to continue her duties temporarily. The deacons and church family voted to employ Mrs. Judy Kinney at a salary of $25.00 per week to provide accompaniment for the choir and congregation. This was the first time in our church's history that we had found it necessary to pay an accompanist.

The budget for 1975 was $69,447.00, and the church had a debt of $38,000 at this time. One of the church buses had to be sold during the year at a price of $300.00 due to the lack of use and the deterioration of the bus itself. Twenty-two people joined our fellowship by baptism and fourteen by letter or statement.

PROPOSAL PRESENTED FOR A 2-YEAR GROWTH PROGRAM

As Rev. Laughter had promised in the May 12 edition of the Courier, he and the deacons presented proposals concerning the future direction on which the church needed to concentrate. As he stated in the proposal:

> Top priority in any growth program must be spiritual growth. But spiritual growth is often reflected in physical achievements. I do not believe anyone can deny that our church is moving forward with Christ as our commander. The evidence of this has been reflected in the lives of thirty-six souls who have found Christ and seventeen others coming by letter to unite with our church. This has all taken place in the past nine months.

The proposal dated June 13, 1976 further stated the following recommendations:

1. That a Search Committee be selected to secure a full-time Minister of Music and Youth. The committee would be Foster Call, Keith Cude, Naomi Fulbright, Horace Hill, and Sonja Stiers. Proposed time for completion was 3 months.
2. That a Building Committee be selected by the Deacons to secure plans for a new sanctuary and a second floor to our present educational building. The committee was Ned Beck, Bennett Henderson,

Lee Hill, Sr., David Kephart, Grace Smith, and Sarah Styers. Proposed time for completion was 1 year.

3. That we secure more property due to the critical parking situation. The only direction to take at this point was along Harrington Avenue. Proposed time for completion was whenever property became available.

Only one of the three above proposals was ever completed to the satisfaction of the church. Even though the Building Committee met and made preparations and recommendations, it was never deemed possible to go ahead with further building plans. Furthermore, property along Harrington Avenue was never purchased even though a couple of possibilities became available. Costwise, the church was not ready to move forward with these two proposals.

Mr. Charles Dickens, a member of our church and son of our former pastor, Rev. J. W. Dickens, was ordained into the gospel ministry on February 22, 1976 and attended Fruitland Bible Institute. He has since then pastored several churches and is now pastor of the Faith Baptist Church in our association.

In June of 1976, our church secretary, Margaret Byrd, who had served in that position for seven and one-half years, resigned in order to stay at home and raise her newborn son. Upon her resignation, Maxine Gobble, another member of Coggins, was asked to assume her position since she had already been substituting during Margaret's absence.

The Liberty Baptist Association sponsored an area-wide crusade on May 2 with guest evangelist Dr. E. J. Daniels. Our church participaed in this effort which took place at the Davidson County Fairgrounds.

The summer of 1976 became the first time we hired a part-time summer youth worker. Keith Cude, a member of our congregation, was elected at a salary of $50.00 per week. Keith did an excellent job involving our youth in Bible studies, recreational activities, and outreach.

We were privileged to be invited to attend the 25th wedding anniversary reception on August 1 for Leonard and Polly Rollins which was held at First Baptist Church. It was a delightful tribute to their many years of marriage.

Fulbright, Sonja Stiers, and Pat Larson for the purpose of finding and recommending a person to fill the first full-time position as Minister of Music and Youth. After months of searching and interviewing, the committee proposed that Ladd Faszold, a twenty-six year old college graduate, be hired. This proposal was presented to the church on July 26, 1977 and was accepted as proposed. Ladd would receive a yearly salary of $9400 . Our youth and their leaders were excited about the direction being taken in meeting their needs and began to look forward to Ladd's leadership. He and his wife, Karen, were both music majors and had many plans for the establishment of a youth choir and full children's choir program. He began his work on August 31, 1977.

The Building Committee was also active in their preparations to present a proposal for a new sanctuary. Their goal was to break ground for this facility in the spring of 1979. Our people were eager to see this come to fruition, but time would see us still without a new sanctuary due to many unforeseen circumstances in the fellowship of the church.

A controversial subject during 1977 was the initiation of a monthly housing allowance for the pastor who expressed his desire to buy his own home. Even though there were objections, the vote for this proposal was affirmed and the church began providing a $350.00 per month housing allowance. Rev. Laughter and Frances completed the buying of their home and moved into it on August 21, 1977 at which time Ladd and Karen Faszold moved into the parsonage so that it would not be empty. This continued to cause problems within the church family for months to come.

A clothes closet ministry was begun in March 1977 which provided used clothing for the needy within our community. The ladies of the church organized the project and saw that needs were met as they occurred.

Missions giving for the year was very good as we contributed a total of $9,058.85 to all SBC missions efforts, including a Lottie Moon Christmas offering of $1600.00.

Homecoming was celebrated on October 9 with Rev. Russell Fitts, pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in King's Mountain, as the guest speaker. Victory Sunday was once again held on September 11 with activities taking place similar to those in 1976.

The first and only "Gong Show" turned into a memorable occasion as our church family gathered for a couple of hours of "tomfoolery." Young and old alike presented skits, told jokes, sang, danced, and otherwise made clowns of themselves in order for a panel of judges to either "gong" them or commend them. It was a night of hilarity which has never been duplicated--at least, not in the same manner! The highlight, of course, was the winner of the evening, Bennett Henderson, who presented his now-famous "Pocket Dance." Bennett can give you details!

Revivals for the year were held on May 1-4 with Rev. Joe Coltrane from the East Hickory Baptist Church, preceded by a Youth Revival led by the Gardner-Webb FOCUS team on April 22. Outdoor worship services which began on July 31 would prove to be the last series of such services even though the program had thus far been successful. The general consensus was that the effort had outworn its originality and effectiveness.

BITS AND PIECES: Our "Mothers of the Year" were Arlene Allred and Minnie Sharpe; three deacons were ordained on October 30--Quentin Campbell, Larry Ward, and Doug Younts; "Roll Call Sunday" was held on May 29, and the "Main Street Singers" from Hattiesburg, Mississippi stopped at Coggins while on tour and presented a May 29 concert.

REV. LAUGHTER RESIGNS

On March 14, 1978, the church family received a letter from Rev. Laughter informing them of his resignation effective on May 31, 1978, in order to accept the pastorate of the Scotts Creek Baptist Church in Sylva. In his letter in the Courier dated March 21, 1978, he said:

> There comes a time when one must take pen in hand to write--a time when words just won't come. This is one of those times for me. For some time now I have earnestly prayed that God would reveal to me His will for my life. Doors have opened and, through prayer and faith, as I sought to know His will, I entered and found peace. It is my prayer that God will grant you understanding and increase your faith. Coggins is a great church, one with untouched potential. I do not waiver even now in my belief that there are great things in store for a church "united" for a common cause--uplifting the name of Jesus!

Once again the church was facing months of searching for the right man to lead Coggins Memorial.

The proposed budget for 1978 was $70,996.00 which included a $4,200 per year housing allowance for the pastor. The salary at this time was $10,400 in addition to benefits, making a total of $18,843.00 per year. New hymnals were bought for the church by Mrs. Cecil King in memory of her husband. These hymnals were dedcated during a special portion of the worship hour on October 1.

A memorable occasion in 1978 was the celebration of Mrs. Ellen Stiers' 90th birthday on May 14. She was recognized during the morning worship on this special day in her life. Mrs. Stiers was a lovely lady not only in appearance but in attitude and personality as well. She had served faithfully for many years and was still teaching a ladies Sunday School class at this time. She was more energetic at age 90 than many are at a much younger age and continued to do her own yard work and housekeeping.

Rev. Raymond Byrd was the guest speaker for Homecoming 1978 which took place on October 8. Special music was provided by the Byrd Quartet and Ron Freeman. Revivals for the year included a spring revival on April 30 with Dr. Charles Page of the First Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia. Dr. Page was and is now a well-known Southern Baptist leader and evangelist. The Gardner-Webb FOCUS team once again led in a youth revival on March 3-5.

The Christmas season took on a new look at Coggins upon the completion of a new outdoor nativity scene. Bruce Floyd, Greg Dickens, Craig Leonard, and Darrell Swing constructed, painted, and erected the new scene which is still being enjoyed each year.

Statistics of the year included an average attendance in VBS of 230, a "Count on Me" Sunday on October 29 with a memorable high attendance of 200 in Sunday School, the naming of Gladys Barger as "Mother of the Year," and our young people's attending a week at Ridgecrest on June 10-16.

Not only did we lose our pastor during 1978, but the Minister of Music and Youth resigned as well. On October 29, Ladd Faszold handed in

his resignation due to disappointments in his job and concerns about his effectiveness. He later took a similar position in another church.

This year proved to be a year of tests and trials as the church family experienced disappointments, controversy, and division within the fellowship. Many people left the church due to controversial decisions and discontent with church leadership and policies. This is not to say that good things had not happened. To the contrary, God had continued to pour out his blessings throughout the year, but he had allowed us to be tested as well. Every church sometimes must learn through its mistakes as well as its successes, and 1978 had been a proving ground for us in many ways.

Rev. Laughter was a delightful pastor who loved his people and made himself available to them at all times. He was known for his visiting in times of trouble and sickness, his compassion for those less fortunate, his rapport with the senior members of the congregation, his winning smile, and his beautiful voice and ministry through music. God had other plans for him and his many talents.

On May 7, during a called business conference, Rev. Inman Stewart was once again called as interim pastor and began his ministry on May 21. A pulpit committee consisting of Arlene Allred, Christine Rowe, Doug Younts, David Kephart, and Foster Call began their search.

THE BUNCE YEARS, PART 2

For the following three months, Rev. Stewart served faithfully as interim pastor and shared so much of himself with our people through his compassion in visitation and meeting the needs among us. Our love for him grew as we followed his leadership during these months. He was honored in 1979 at the end of his interim ministry at Coggins and was named **"Pastor Emeritus"** of this church during a special service.

It was our pleasure to invite the Sparks back again on March 18 for a weekend reunion and revival but with a very special purpose in mind--the ordination of one of their own into the ministry. Robert McCrary was the first of the Sparks to be ordained and later graduated from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary after completing his Master's of Divinity requirements. He began his first pastorate in Emporia, Virginia and is currently pastor of the Peace's Chapel Baptist

Church in Oxford, North Carolina. A couple of years later, Tommy Lovell who was also a "Spark," was ordained into the Presbyterian denomination. Our very special guests for the March 18 weekend, however, were Dearl and Betty Bunce who were leading in the revival and ordination service.

We were delighted to hear from our Pulpit Committee in the following weeks that they had prayerfully considered the matter and had come to a unanimous agreement that we should ask Dearl and Betty Bunce to return to Coggins for a second pastorate. Without a doubt, this was an unusual step to take, but the church family, the Pulpit Committee, and the Bunces felt that God was indeed leading in this direction. Therefore, on August 27, 1979, the Bunces returned to Lexington and Coggins Memorial after being voted on by the church family on June 17.

One of our former members was involved in a special mission project and requested our participation through financial support. Rev. Charles Dickens was asked to go to Guadelupe on a church-building expedition and we helped support this effort through a love offering. Upon returning from his trip, Charles presented a detailed report and slide presentation on the team's accomplishments at a worship hour on July 29.

Even though our attendance during the months without a pastor had maintained a commendable level, we began to see a steady growth in participation with the advent of a new pastor. Our Wednesday night programs were especially strong, and we not only had an average of 120 persons each week, but we also had a choir enrollment among all age groups of 84 on a weekly basis.

BITS AND PIECES: Our VBS enrollment in 1979 was 240, the "Mother of the Year" was Rita Hobbs, the "Father of the Year" was David Kephart. Rita recieved a lovely silver tray and David was presented an engraved plaque. The youth week revival on May 4 was led by the Gardner-Webb FOCUS team. Our RA's participated in the State RA Track Meet and Terry Atkins and Everette Leonard came home winners. Other participants in that event were Jeff Cope and Billy Jones. Maxine Gobble resigned as church secretary on November 11 which made it necessary

to begin interviewing prospects for this important position. At a later date, Mrs. Mary Moree was hired to fill the vacancy. Otis Greathouse, a state Sunday School worker, visited during 1979 and analyzed the Bible Teaching program during a "Bible Venture" campaign. He advised us of his evaluation of our strengths and weaknesses and otherwise tried to improve this area of ministry.

An important decision made on November 11 during business conference was the establishment of a "Cooperative Gardening" project as soon as land became available. This program would provide a community area where church members, needy families, and interested neighbors could pay a small fee, have their own garden plot, and grow fresh vegetables to support their families. The church accepted this proposal with excitement and great interest.

COOPERATIVE GARDENING GOES INTO FULL SWING

Due to the gracious generosity of a Charlotte businessman, our Cooperative Gardening project came into full "bloom" on January 13, 1980. He gave his permission for the church to use a large parcel of land across from the Lexington Drive-In without charge. The land was prepared, marked off in individual gardens, and made available at a cost of $20.00 per plot. The program was a tremendous success as twenty families and various community groups such as Meals-On-Wheels, Davidson Alcoholic Care, and the Association for Retarded Citizens planted gardens and participated in this joint project. A magazine article appeared in The SBC TIMES magazine on August 16, 1980 defining this project and giving information concerning its development. A Garden-Way tiller and Allis-Chalmers tractor were donated by concerned friends to aid in the cooperative gardening effort and were made available to any gardener desiring the use of these machines. The entire program was a "cooperative" effort as families shared tools, ideas, fellowship while working in the gardens, and even the food from their gardens.

Rev. Bunce was selected to serve on the North Carolina Baptist World Hunger Committee in an effort to make every church aware of hunger

problems within our state, nation, and the world and to encourage involvement in world hunger. He became a highly-respected and well-known figure in the state in the area of world hunger efforts and is still serving on this committee. The church family entertained Dr. John Cheyne on July 21 on our annual World Hunger Day. Dr. Cheyne was the director of the Foreign Mission Board's World Hunger Relief division and spoke to us on Sunday morning as well as visited the site of the cooperative gardening program to offer suggestions. In the meantime, the church had voted to purchase a $2500 Hydro-Drill well-drilling system to be used wherever it was deemed most needed in missions areas around the world. Dr. Cheyne offered suggestions for its possible location. Coggins had become committed to the problem of world hunger, and we were well on our way in trying to make a significant difference.

Betty Bunce began a new youth choir--"New Beginning"--during 1980, and this group participated in several area revivals under her leadership.

With the welfare of our youth in mind, a Drug Seminar was held on August 5 by Phillip M. Seuberling, chairman of the Criminal Justice Department at Davidson County Community College. Mr. Seuberling was an instructor in Narcotics and Defensive Tactics for the Bureau of Training and Standards for the state. He presented in graphic detail the dangers of drug and alcohol use and abuse among young people. Later in the year, our youth enjoyed the Mt. Harmony Baptist Church youth group who presented "Heaven Help Our Home," a musical drama.

Pictorial church directories were published during 1980 due to growth within the church family. A highlight of the year was High Attendance Day on November 30 with a goal of 200 in Sunday School; however, with participation and hard work, the goal was surpassed with an attendance of 207. It seemed to be a good time to establish another Preliminary Survey Building Committee to decide whether or not a new sanctuary needed to be built. The idea of a new sanctuary never seemed to die, but neither did it seem to take root.

A Deacons' Wives organization was begun in 1980 which remained active until 1984. The wives of our deacons met monthly and planned

service projects within the church as well as promoted fellowship among the deacon families. It was their desire to complement the work of their husbands and aid in any manner that would be of service to the church. On September 7, two new deacons were elected and ordained--Keith Cude and Marshall Woodie--and their wives were welcomed into this new organization.

RICE BOWLS BECOME FAMILIAR

Continuing with our world hunger interest, the church fellowship enjoyed an impressive service labeled a "love feast" on February 11, 1981. This service was centered around Christ's love for us and his mandate that we care for each other. It was during this evening that the Hydro-Drill system was on display and a dedication service was held. It was at this time that the first "rice bowls" were handed out among the people--an item that was to become very familiar as the years went by. The objective of the rice bowl was to have each member, whether adult or child, to take a bowl and fill them with their offering for world hunger. A date was then given for the bowls to be returned. Also in conjunction with world hunger efforts, Stan Nichols, a friend of the church, donated a 4200 gallon tanker to be parked at our cooperative gardening site so that a constant water supply was made available. Help was coming from all directions in this effort. Later in the year, Tom Waddill, missionary to Serenje, Zambia, visited while on furlough on November 22, 1981 and saw the Hydro-Drill system demonstrated at the cooperative gardening site. This demonstration was for the purpose of seeing whether or not Rev. Waddill would be able to use the equipment at his missions site in Zambia.

PEOPLE AND EVENTS: Tracy Dyer, one of our young men, was honored on January 18 during morning worship as he received his Eagle Scout award and rank. The "Mothers of the Year" for 1981 were Jan Woodie and Betty Bunce, and the "Father of the Year" was Lionel Wall. Gladys Barger was honored on December 11 by the Association for Retarded Citizens for her unselfish work with and leadership of our JOY

class at Coggins. This was the first class for mentally handicapped persons the church had ever attempted and at this time had an enrolment of approximately fifteen. Dan Epting and Linwood Bunce were ordained as deacons on August 30, 1981, and Tim Robbins was ordained into the ministry on October 11, 1981 as requested by the McKinney Baptist Church in McKinney, Virginia where he would be pastoring.

With the idea in mind that we had always observed Baptist Men's Day and recognized the work of our men, it was decided that in 1981 we would have the first "Ladies Day" on July 26. This idea originated with the Deacon's Wives group who made all plans and preparations for the day including the invitation to Mrs. Polly Rollins to speak during the morning worship.

In a called business meeting on April 5, the church voted to refurbish the foyer of the educational building at an approximate cost of $3500.00. The decorating would include new floor covering, a large trophy case (this was completely handmade by Bruce Floyd), and a large directory board to show classroom locations. Mary Coleman was the chairman of the project and did a beautiful job in seeing that the work was completed. It should be noted that Bruce Floyd not only built the beautiful trophy case, but he also made the frame around the directory board in order to match the other furnishings.

The youth were busy in 1981 with weekend revivals, one of which was at the Forest Lake Baptist Church in Forest City on May 23. They then went to work to raise funds for a seven-day mission trip to Webster, West Virginia on July 10-17 where they would be conducting VBS classes in the mornings and leading in revival services each evening. Their fund-raising project was a yard sale and car wash which netted $426.00 towards their expenses. This fund-raiser was a "first" at Coggins which up to this time had never approved this method of support.

If there is any special occasion more exciting in the church year than Homecoming, then it has to be a HOMECOMING-REVIVAL-SPARKS REUNION! On September 25-27, this special event was held as we welcomed the Sparks back for another reunion and three of our "homegrown" boys who had either entered the ministry or were preparing to do so. The Sparks led in mini-concerts on Friday and Saturday nights and again on Sunday

morning, climaxing their weekend with an hour-long concert following the Homecoming meal. Rev. Robert McCrary, Tommy Lovell, and Graham Bunce presented the messages for the weekend. Tommy was attending seminary and would later be ordained into the Presbyterian denomination, Graham was still attending college, and Robert was pastor of the Purdy Baptist Church in Emporia, Virginia. All of these boys were members of the Sparks who had made commitments to Christian service during those eventful days together. It was a delightful weekend of fellowship and nostalgia as well as recommitment to the work the Lord had set before us.

Always being open to ways to better meet the needs of the people, the church purchased a video tape recorder and color television outfit to be used for video presentations. This system has been widely used and greatly appreciate through the years by all age groups.

The annual session of the Liberty Baptist Association met at Coggins in September 1981. The year ended with a church membership of 607, fifteen additions during the year, an average Sunday School attendance of 151, and a VBS enrollment of 186.

THE BEGINNING OF A TRADITION-- THE LAST SUPPER DRAMA

In the life of every church, there are "lean" years and "productive" years, and 1982 proved to be one of the more productive ones for us. It was a year when every division and organization seemed to put forth its greatest effort to see that God's work and the ministry of Coggins Memorial met the needs of each individual.

The Local Missions committee had been established for many years but became noticeably more active as they replenished the food pantry and organized their program more effectively. Local missions money was made available to needy church members or neighbors after investigation of their circumstances by a committee member. Due to several social service agencies in town who were aware of our program, the food pantry became much more familiar to the community, and we began to see a steady growth in the number of families who requested help.

Coggins had the distinct reputation of being one of only a very few local churches who provided aid to needy families in any way.

Evening worship hours were changed on Sunday during a business conference on February 21. It was decided that during the fall and winter months from October to April, the evening worship would be held at 6:00 p.m. When Daylight Savings time began each April, the 7:00 p.m. worship hour would be re-established. During the same conference, we voted to contribute our old mimeograph and folding machines to the newly-formed Trinity Baptist mission. Having been a mission church ourselves at the beginning, it was only fitting that we remember how important help from sister churches can be during the organization of a church.

"HERE'S HOPE"--that was the theme for our April 4-9 Convention-wide revival campaign for the year. Churches throughout the state participated in revivals simultaneously in a highly promoted campaign that included a mass media blitz in North Carolina. The evangelist for the week was Rev. Mack Roberts, a dynamic and vibrant personality.

For such a significant revival effort, there could have been no more appropriate or meaningful way to begin than the presentation of the very first **"Last Supper Drama."** This drama, written by Ernest Emurian, portrayed the scene in the Upper Room before Christ's crucifixion and centered around the thoughts that may have been plaguing the minds of the disciples as they contemplated the betrayal and ultimate death of Jesus. Their question was "Is it I, Lord, is it I?" Under the direction of Carol Epting and with the participation of our deacons as the twelve disciples and the pastor as Jesus, months of rehearsals and memorization, staging and costuming, and spiritual preparation were necessary to make this drama possible. It was indeed the biggest and mostly highly-organized production the church had ever seen and was promoted throughout Lexington in hopes that attendance would be good. On April 4, 1982, the "Last Supper Drama" was presented for the first time to an overflowing crowd. Our sanctuary had never seen quite so many people gathered together at one time. It was a sight to behold! Cars were parked all the way down the block on Harrington Avenue and Wilfred Avenue, and our own parking lots were filled as

well. The drama was beautifully presented and made each of those watching search his own soul concerning his relationship with Christ. Music had been pre-recorded and was provided by the Sanctuary Choir under the direction of Betty Bunce and accompanied by Margaret Byrd. Without a doubt, the drama was the most poignant and meaningful worship presentation ever given in our church's history.

CONCERN CONTINUES FOR WORLD HUNGER

As voted on December 13, 1981, we were finally able to ship the Hydro-Drill equipment to Serenje, Zambia in West Africa to be used by agricultural missionary, Tom Waddill. Rev. Waddill returned to Coggins on May 7-8 to check on the system and prepare it for shipment. By this time we had also purchased five deep well pumps, five shallow well pumps, and spare parts for the machines. An article in the Biblical Recorder featured the well-drilling project in Zambia. An article also appeared in SEEDS magazine, a nation-wide world hunger publication, that had been written by Rev. Bunce titled "How To Do A Church Garden Project." The article explained our involvement in the cooperative gardening program. The world hunger offering during 1982 totaled $6,231.53 which indicated the great interest that had been generated among our people. Eight youth and adults participated in an area-wide CROP walk for world hunger on October 3 and raised a total of $275.00 through their sponsors. This was the first time Coggins had been a part of a CROP Walk effort.

NEW PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED

Coggins had experienced a subtle change through the years in the number of members attending regularly who were over the age of fifty, and it became apparent that our ministry for senior adults needed to be evaluated. On February 21, 1982, the church voted to organize a community-wide senior citizens group which would meet monthly in the fellowship hall. This group was not to be limited to our church family only but to any individual in the community. The first meeting was a tremendous success with an attendance of 45 men and

women thus indicating the need this age group felt for fellowship and companionship. The **Ageless Wonders**, which they named themselves, has been a successful venture throughout the years and are currently meeting each month as well as taking special trips at designated times.

The Wednesday night programs have always been effective and well-attended; however, in October of 1982, we established a weekly Wednesday evening "Family Meal," cooked by such people as Lucille Allen, Rita Hobbs, Betty Bunce, Margaret Byrd, Georgia Baker, Lillian Hyatt, Lucille Fletcher, Novella Saunders, Kathryn Roach, Jenny Powers, Barbara Smith, Jeanne Dyer and many other volunteers. The meal was followed by age-group activities as well as music, missions organizations, and Bible study groups.

On October 3, the Coggins Courier became a weekly publication much to the joy of our members. Up to this time, the Courier had been a bimonthly publication, but due to the increase in activity and the desire to keep our people better informed, the decision was made to publish it weekly. The church secretary, Margaret Byrd, and the Pastor and Betty worked weekly to print a six-page newsletter that also served as a weekly bulletin for Sunday morning worship.

Homecoming 1982 was a delightful day as Rev. Jerry Laughter, Frances, and Renee returned to Coggins as our guests on September 26. Rev. Laughter not only preached the morning message but also presented several musical selections. Our musical guests for the day, however, were the Jung Family from Buies Creek. The Jungs were the mother, sisters, and brother of our own Anita Bunce, wife of Linwood Bunce. This family group blessed us with a beautiful selection of close-harmony hymns and Christian music.

The church family was saddened during this year due to the death of Ben Newton, a very quiet but effective witness for Christ here at Coggins. Ben died of a heart attack while flying his private airplane. His wife, Judy, was not a pilot but was left with the great task of landing the plane. She accomplished this in a very dramatic scenario with the help of instructions given by another pilot by radio only. Judy's dramatic and tragic story has been told many times on national television as well as locally, but she presented her poignant recount of the events of that

day at a special service of personal testimony during evening worship on May 16, 1982, giving God all the glory in making it possible for her to land safely despite Ben's death at the controls.

PERSONS AND EVENTS: On July 20-24, fifty of our people attended the **World's Fair** in Knoxville, Tennessee--a rare opportunity indeed. Our JOY class, under the leadership of Gladys Barger, participated in the **Special Olympics** held at Lexington Senior High and won twelve ribbons for their efforts. The "**Mother of the Year**" was Lois Beck, and the "**Father of the Year**" 1982 was Marvin Burch. **Ladies Day** was held on August 22 with Mrs. Winnie Pearce as the guest speaker and the theme "God--My Strength." The first **Choir Workshop** for our Sanctuary choir was held on October 15-16 with Dr. Charles Storey of the N. C. Baptist Music Department as guest conductor.

NOTABLE NOTES: We were proud of our pastor, Dearl Bunce, who was awarded his **Doctor of Ministry** degree at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky on Friday, December 17, after completing his actual work on the degree in July. Dr. Bunce presented certificates of appreciation to his secretary, Margaret Byrd, and his wife, Betty, for their encouragement, help, and support with his thesis and other general work.

Betty Bunce was honored by having one of her original Christmas services, "**Carol Sing**," published in the December 1982 issue of The Church Musician, a nation-wide Southern Baptist magazine.

At the end of 1982, we had contributed $2,257 to the Lottie Moon offering, we had met our budget of $89,000, and the church was completely debt free. Sunday School enrollment was **278** with an average attendance of **122**, VBS enrollment was **166**, and there had been fifteen baptisms and seven other additions during the year. Our parsonage was valued at $66,000 and our church property's value was $300,000.

AGRO-CARE MINISTRIES IS BORN

Even though many special events and memorable occasions occurred during 1983, the ultimate highlight was the exciting "birth" of a new ministry at Coggins Memorial. As one can see from the reading of this

history, our church's involvement in world hunger efforts and the interest in helping alleviate this problem had taken hold throughout the past three years.

The Cooperative Program effort during the year had again supplied produce for needy families, social agencies, and church families as well. A total of one hundred garden plots on the old Grubb land which measured approximately twenty acres was being used to its capacity by the forty families and groups participating in the project. In a three-month period, the church had already distributed seventy bags of groceries from the Food Pantry as well as provided approximately $900.00 in financial aid for needy families. Vegetables from the gardens were being taken to shut-ins and senior adults throughout the neighborhood. Newspapers were being saved by our members and brought to the church basement for storage until Lionel Wall could transport them by pickup truck to the recycling center to be sold and the profits deposited to our world hunger account. Special guests involved in world hunger projects also visited. Ed and Mary Brentham, agricultural missionaries to Haiti, were popular guests who shared their slides and personal experiences in their own humble and compassionate manner which clearly exhibited their love for the Haitian people. Bob and Jan Salley shared with us on January 16, 1983 concerning their involvement in World Hunger Relief, Inc., a foundation initiated by them. Their musical testimony blessed our congregation. With all these activities taking place, it was evident to not only our church family but to the community as well that we had a serious interest in the world hunger problem.

The greatest indication of this committment occurred at a called business conference on Sunday, July 31, when we met to consider a bold new expansion of our world hunger efforts--**Agro-Care Ministries.** A sharing and discussion time was held on Wednesday night, July 27, preceding the Sunday conference during which time the members could ask questions and discuss options for the project. A series of events had led up to this proposal.

On June 25, 1983, the Franklin Shockey estate on Highway 8 was auctioned at public sale to the highest bidder. It had been divided into several tracts, but four of these tracts had appealed to Rev. Bunce as

possibilities for a gardening and world hunger center. He and two other individuals attended the auction and obtained the high bid on the four tracts in the heart of the estate. As the three were making financial arrangements for the purchase, Rev. Bunce's plans for the property were made known to the community in general and our church in particular. The church asked Rev. Bunce and his co-purchasers to allow it to assume the bid on the property and to purchase it so that Coggins might sponsor the world hunger project. The purchasers agreed, and the deacon board began drawing up plans for their proposal to the church family.

On Sunday, July 31, 1983, 11:00 a.m., the church voted on the following proposal:

1. That we purchase 78 acres of choice property which included a 14-room lodge, two ponds, an airstrip, and a large barn.
2. That we buy the property at a cost of $127,929.75--$84,000 of which was borrowed from Lexington State Bank and $27,000 which was loaned by five individuals within the church family.
3. That the purposes of the purchase be:
   a. A cooperative gardening ministry
   b. A scientific gardening training center
   c. A training center for agri-missionaries
   d. A partner-in-ministry with selected underdeveloped areas of this country and around the world
   e. A homebase for world hunger fund-raising efforts
   f. A Christian life center and retreat area
   g. A Christian camping facility

The goal of the church was to raise $200,000 in the next three years for the purchase and renovation of the Agro-Care property. The overall goal was to minister both physically and spiritually to one million children and adults through this project. An Agro-Care Committee was appointed consisting of David Kephart, chairman; Horace Hill, assistant chairman; Anita Bunce, secretary; and Ralph Rummage, financial advisor. The church voted to step out in faith and begin this new ministry whose theme would be "Caring Is Sharing."

In the August 7 edition of The Courier, Rev. Bunce stated in his Pastor's Pen that **"Agro-Care Ministries is born!"** He further stated:

> Most of us are wondering, 'But how will we pay for this gigantic undertaking?' My answer is, 'I do not know--but God does!' I have never believed that it is God's will that **one** child, to say nothing of millions, should perish while I have ten times more than I can use. God has provided enough for every person's needs--He has not provided for every person's greed. Our task is to help spread it around.

News of plans for this ministry quickly spread and contributions began filtering in by mail and through personal contacts in a great demonstration of support. By August 7, more than $70,000 had been pledged toward the $200,000 goal. Contributors not only came from within the church family but also from within the community, the state, and several other states. Further interest was generated through a Dispatch newspaper article dated September 23, 1983, entitled "Church Taking Hunger Fight to Fields" in which the reporter, Margie Everhart, explained in great detail the history of our interest and goals set for the years ahead. Agro-Care Ministries was indeed born!

OTHER WORK CONTINUES

Exciting as Agro-Care Ministries was at this time, other "routine" but interesting and productive activities were taking place during 1983. A new Sunday School campaign entitled **"Together We Boldly Build Our Sunday School"** was begun on March 6 and continued through May 8. During this special campaign our average attendance increased ten percent and our contacts to prospects and inactive members increased eleven percent. Easter activities for the year included the second annual presentation of **"The Last Supper Drama"** with deacons from Reeds Baptist and Stoner's Grove Baptist assisting in the serving of communion. It was once again a great success with overflowing crowds present for the two presentations on March 27 and April 1. On Sunday morning, March 27, a special worship hour called **"The Road to the Cross"** was presented and included the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem. This was a beautiful and thought-provoking worship which wonderfully prepared us for the celebration of the season. Thirty-five lovely Easter lilies donated by various members in honor or in memory of loved ones graced the sanctuary.

Earlier in the year on January 9, 1983, the church met in conference and voted to **purchase the vacant lot** on the far side of the parsonage which measured 75 feet by 175 feet for a cost of $4,105.00. The church unanimously approved the purchase, and a special offering to offset this expense was taken on January 23. During a June 12, 1983 conference, the church voted to **amend the Church Constitution** concerning **deacon elections.** The new procedure had been outlined and distributed to the congregation on May 8 so that they might consider it before voting. It was also voted at this time to begin holding conferences on the second Sunday morning, 11:00 a.m., of each month.

Christmas activities flourished as usual but included a couple of new events such as "Christmas Dinner with Friends" on Wednesday, December 14, as the church family met and brought visitors to share a specially prepared meal. "He Is Here," a musical celebration of Christmas included involvement by the youth, adult, children, and preschool choirs. Our youth led in a dramatic presentation of "A Fireside Christmas" on December 21 which was a combination of drama and music. The children's choir, "The King's Kids," presented the first children's musical entitled **"Wow! It's Christmas!"** with a cast of thirty-five children ages six through eleven. It was the first of many children's musicals the church enjoyed in the years to come. A memorable highlight of Christmas 1983 was the significant **Lottie Moon Christmas** offering received in the amount of $3,161.00--far and above the $2500 goal the church had set.

PEOPLE AND EVENTS: "The Tintinnabulators" from Memorial Baptist Church in Buies Creek, presented a lovely bell choir program of music under the direction of Mrs. Patty Jung. A **Thanksgiving meal** in November was attended by seventy-five members, and sixteen complete meals were taken to our shut-ins. **Homecoming** was celebrated on September 25 with Rev. Bunce presenting the morning message and the Sanctuary Choir providing the music. Seven babies were dedicated on **Baby Dedication Day** on May 1, and Carol Floyd was named **"Mother of the Year."** Both **Baptist Men's Day** and **Ladies' Day** were held in 1983 with Al Womack, a layman from Statesville, as the special speaker for the men,and Carol Leigh Humphries, missionary to Nigeria, as the speaker for the ladies. These events were held on January 23 and August 28 respectively. A

total of twelve members graduated from high school and college and were recognized on the May 29 **Graduate Sunday.** Fourteen youth and four leaders attended a fascinating week at **Ridgecrest** on June 11. **Rev. George Williamson** was the guest evangelist for our spring revival on May 15-18, and a **Lay Renewal Weekend** was held on November 18-20. This was a tremendous recommitment weekend which featured small group Bible studies and personal Bible study in hopes to re-evaluate and revitalize our spiritual lives.

Other events included an ole' time outdoor **gospel singing** at Agro-Care on November 6 with the Sojourners of Lexington, the Happy Notes of Welcome, and the Byrd Quartet of Coggins Memorial providing the evening's music. Our **"Over the Hill"** softball team was presented the Sportsmanship trophy for the season which, in the case of a church team, can be as important as the playoff trophy itself.

Rev. Bunce was recognized this year by the Optimist Club and was presented a certificate "for devoted and unselfish service to the welfare of Community, State, and Nation" for his world hunger efforts. It was also our church's desire and pleasure to present a numbered print of Bob Timberlake's **"Pumpkins In the Snow"** to Rev. Bunce in honor of his recent completion of his Doctor of Ministry degree. An engraved nameplate read "Dearl L. Bunce, Doctor of Ministry, December 17, 1982, presented by Coggins Memorial Baptist Church." Rev. Bunce also participated in a Liberty Baptist Associational Minister's Retreat at Camp Caraway on May 23 with twenty-eight of the forty-four ministers from the association present. Leonard Rollins, director of missions, said the retreat **"seemed to strengthen and enrich our fellowship and provided an excellent opportunity for the ministers to get to know each other better."**

The year 1983 had been an extremely busy one as Agro-Care was established and as our faith was tested by taking such a giant step forward without knowing where God was going to lead. The church was growing, and a new vision had been implanted within our minds and souls.

AGRO-CARE BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE

With the advent of Agro-Care Ministries came the need for great cooperation and unity in purpose. A venture this large could be accomplished only with the united support of the membership. Most seemed eager to pitch in and give a helping hand in renovating and preparing the lodge as well as grooming the property. The ladies met for several sewing sessions and made curtains for the windows. The Deacon's Wives held a gigantic yard sale on May 5, 1984, and raised a total of $813.50 to be used for the other renovations. Various civic groups donated time and labor in landscaping the property, and a beautiful rustic sign was made and designed by Bruce Floyd and Jerry Byrd to be erected at the Highway 8 entrance to Agro-Care in order for passers-by to be made aware of the project.

A major transformation began to take place in the chapel. New lighting was installed, siding was placed on the outside, and a lovely lecturn and altar were hand-built by David Kephart. General construction was handled by Henry Smith. All of these improvements were made possible by special contributions in memory of Willie Almond and Virginia Humphrey Graham (parents of Betty Bunce) by their children and grandchildren. Mr. and Mrs. Coy (Louise) Revill furnished the chapel in memory of Louise's mother, Mrs. H. M. Byrd.

Our youth did their part in helping to contribute to the world hunger fund by planting a large area of pumpkins at a special "planting party" held on May 12, 1984. All proceeds from the pumpkins which were sold at K-Mart and other sites went to world hunger projects. The young people also participated "big time" in the annual CROP Walk held on October 7. A total of thirty youth, adults, and children made the ten-mile walk and raised **$3,300**--a tremendous effort on the part of the walkers and their sponsors.

A big day in the life of Agro-Care was the weekend of July 28-29, 1984, when the first **"Agro-Care Weekend"** was held. This was a special first anniversary weekend celebration and included visits from the ministry's contributors and other friends. Tours were conducted around

the property, our famous "Lexington Barbeque" was served, a special Christian concert and worship service and a memorial service recognizing all donations made in memory of loved ones were held. A beautiful memorial plaque was erected in the foyer of the lodge which indicated all memorial gifts. Another plaque indicated all gifts "in honor of" loved ones. Lovely embossed certificates of appreciation were presented to all contributors. It was a wonderful weekend of excitement and anticipation as well as great fellowship with both old and new friends. Everyone was working toward a common goal--the continuance and progression of Agro-Care Ministries.

Not only had the church become active in world hunger efforts, but the Liberty Association had begun to show a marked increase in interest in this direction. The first "Liberty Baptist Association World Hunger Conference" was held at Agro-Care lodge during 1984 with thirty-one present from nine churches. Gary Gundersen, editor of SEEDS magazine, was the guest speaker. Carolyn Hicks and John Caldwell were also guests who shared information concerning the "Togo" project in which North Carolina Baptists were involved. This project will be discussed in detail in the following pages.

SUMMER YOUTH WORKER HIRED

On February 19, a new youth choir was formed and was named "Promise." The director and accompanist was Margaret Byrd and Anita Bunce; however, Carolyn McPherson later directed the choir. A "first" for our youth was the use of pre-recorded instrumental accompaniment tapes. The children's choirs had been using them for more than a year. The youth loved this upbeat music and sang with enthusiasm to this new concept in youth choir presentations.

On May 6, 1984, the church voted to hire Mickey Sharpe as summer youth worker to lead in the areas of youth, children, Agro-Care, and senior adult ministries. Mickey began his work on May 20 and continued for twelve weeks. Within that short period of time, he not only won the hearts of our youth and children, but also our adults appreciated the great enthusiasm he possessed as well as his deep commitment to God.

Mickey's main concern that summer was to lead the youth to a deeper relationship with God. He did this not only through concentrated Bible study sessions, but also through recreation and fellowship. Mickey possessed a powerful and stirring singing voice and shared many times with our people during worship and special occasions. Great things were accomplished during the summer of 1984 at Coggins, and the love our people felt for Mickey remains with us to the present.

HOME BIBLE STUDIES FLOURISH

As a result of the Lay Renewal Weekend in November of 1983, a series of Home Bible study groups were begun on February 12, 1984 for the purpose of providing indepth personal Bible study in small group settings in the home. It was voted on by the church on January 8, 1984, that eleven groups begin meeting on Sunday nights for a three-month trial period. This made it necessary to cancel evening services at the church on Sunday nights and was a controversial subject at the time. On February 4, those interested in leading one of these Bible studies met for a three and one-half hour training session and personal recommitment time. The home Bible study groups were a tremendous success and averaged sixty-five to seventy persons each week in the eleven groups.

Despite the success of the groups and the fact that Sunday evening worship services had been very poorly attended during the previous year, the church met for conference in June and decided to dispense with the home study groups and go back to the regular Sunday evening worship. This, again, was a controversial issue which was met with opposition by those who felt that the home studies had been effective; however, the majority ruled and evening worship was re-established. Several of the groups attempted meeting at other times during the week; but due to busy schedules and other conflicts, most of the home Bible study groups soon disbanded. This seemed to be especially sad since the evening worship hour did not benefit from the decision either and attendance continued to be poor.

A new Sunday School campaign entitled **"5 More in '84"** attempted to encourage classes to enroll five additional persons in each of their departments during 1984. This campaign met with only limited success.

Knowing the importance of planning and preparing as church leaders, Rev. Bunce organized and conducted the first "Leadership Retreat" weekend at Agro-Care on September 14-15, 1984. The weekend was filled with concentrated planning by each organization and division as well as long-range planning by the entire group which consisted of deacons, church council, and all teachers and workers in each department. The setting at Agro-Care lent itself to the purpose of the meeting as we found ourselves relaxing and enjoying the fellowship with our fellow workers in Christ.

SPECIAL EVENTS TAKE PLACE IN 1984

In March of 1984, a series of devastating tornadoes ripped through the eastern part of the state, leaving untold millions of dollars of damages to personal property and claiming several lives in the process. The church felt led to join the efforts of thousands of other North Carolinians in helping tornado victims get their lives back in order as much as possible, especially since some of these people were neighbors and friends of our church family. A tremendous relief effort was established as our people gave money, furniture, clothing, food, and household items to be used in helping thirteen families who had been left homeless by the storms. A total of $426.00 was contributed by Coggins' people in addition to material gifts. Personal thank-you notes from the families our church helped were later received in expression of their gratitude for our concern.

Johnny and Paulette Morgan left on June 18 for a month-long mission tour to Galeana, Mexico, a poverty-stricken mountain area. They participated in a building program which constructed a one-room church and a parsonage in that area. Once again the church family gave generously in support of a special missions effort.

PEOPLE AND EVENTS: Dan Larson was ordained as a deacon on October 21. He was one of five newly-elected deacons for 1984 which included Jerry Powers, Johnny Morgan, Nick Baker, and Lionel Wall. A **$1,000 memorial gift** from the Minnie Lee Trantham family estate was given to the church to be used as we saw the need. An anonymous donor from within the

church family gave us a **15-passenger Dodge van** to be used by groups needing transportation. Our **R. A. Chapter** was registered with the state convention and was named the **"Leonard Rollins Chapter"** in honor of our first pastor. Rev. Rollins was presented a plaque from the R.A.'s with the date and name of the chapter. This now hangs in the associational office. As a very special love gift, we presented a **Bob Timberlake numbered print** to Mrs. Polly Rollins.

Many others were recognized during the year in addition to those mentioned above. Mrs. Carol Epting was named **"Mother of the Year;"** **Jeff Hill** received a Bronze Star for bravery during his tour of duty in Grenada with the U. S. Marines; **Baptist Men's Day** speaker was Leonard Rollins, who was also our guest speaker for **Homecoming Day, September 30. Ladies' Day** was held on August 26 with guest speaker, Jo Kincaid, who was a youth and special ministries worker at First Baptist Church in Hudson. The VBS enrollment for 1984 was **217** with an average attendance of **167.** The Liberty Association held its first annual **"Evangelism Rally"** at Finch Auditorium in Thomasville on August 12 with an attendance of approximately five hundred. The **Lottie Moon offering** goal was $2500 which was exceeded with a total of $2595.00.

The **"Last Supper Drama"** was held on April 15 and 19 with the deacons from Faith Baptist and Stoner's Grove Baptist churches assisting in serving the Lord's Supper. Once again it was a great success and attendance was exceptional for both presentations. The Sanctuary choir presented a lovely sunrise service drama complete with scenery and dialogue on April 22 entitled **"Eyewitness to Easter."** The drama was appreciated so much during the sunrise service that it was presented again during the morning worship due to great demand.

Christmas 1984 was special as usual with dramas, parties, fellowships, and caroling. **Ninety-one adults** attended an adult party on December 14 at the church--one of the largest gatherings ever by the adults. The **Jung Family** returned on December 16 to present a Christmas concert which blessed our hearts tremendously. It was truly a highlight of Christmas 1984 and could not have been surpassed by any professional singing group.

We had completed another year at Coggins. God had blessed us and we had grown in many ways. A new year was dawning with new opportunities.

NC/TOGO PARTNERSHIP BECOMES A REALITY TO COGGINS MEMORIAL

As has been established in the preceding chapter, North Carolina Baptists had entered into a "Partnership in Wholeness" with the small West African country of Togo. Lay missionaries, pastors, construction workers and others were being sponsored by local churches to minister to the Togolese by sharing God's Word, educating them in gardening techniques, constructing bridges in strategic areas within the country, digging wells, and teaching health care. On February 28, 1985, Rev. Leonard Rollins was the first pastor from North Carolina to go to Togo to lead in discipleship training classes in the area of Moretan. His main duty was to train native pastors how to lead their own people to Christ. The church family presented Rev. Rollins a prayer calendar complete with signatures of persons who would be praying for him each day as he traveled and ministered to the Togolese.

On December 8, 1985, the church voted to sponsor Rev. Bunce and Betty on a similar mission tour to Togo with their departure planned for March 27, 1986. This was an exciting undertaking for our people as the realities of foreign missions were being experienced firsthand through financial support and prayers. The months ahead would fly by as preparations were made for this special trip.

AGRO-CARE WORK PROGRESSES

As was the desire of the church, Agro-Care was being used on an almost weekly basis by one group or another. If nothing else had been accomplished from our objectives up to this point, the fact that Agro-Care Lodge was serving as a Christian retreat center had been established. During 1985, the lodge and grounds had been used to entertain thirty different church, civic, and family groups for weekend and week-long retreats, meetings, and conferences. Weddings were being planned at the chapel which was an ideal setting for an outdoor ceremony. With the property being enjoyed by the church family and others, we continued to be grateful for such a lovely, peaceful, and

restful location. Agro-Care had already been such a wonderful asset to the church, and we felt fortunate that this had been made possible by and through our congregation.

The cooperative gardening program was, as always, "producing" great results. Forty-one families during 1985 used the sixty-two garden plots that were available. The availability of land to grow one's own garden seemed to never lose its popularity. Not only was it productive, but it was also therapeutic and became a welcome past-time for many retired individuals.

The Deacon's Wives project for the year had been the publishing of a cookbook with local recipes. This was a major undertaking and was a first-time effort for these ladies. The project was a big success, and all proceeds went directly into the Agro-Care account for use as needed. Pat Larson led the cookbook campaign, gathered recipes, and edited the cookbook. Margaret Byrd typed the cookbook and mimeographed it in the church office. Lionel Wall, Marylin Campbell, Pat Larson, Justin Byrd and Margaret Byrd collated the five hundred cookbooks and prepared them for sale, and Jerry Byrd provided the artwork for the cover. It was a joint effort and is still being sold and enjoyed by our church families as they "experiment" with new recipes from our own great Coggins cooks.

The big event of the year was **"Agro-Care Benefit Day"** which had been scheduled for November 9. Many months of preparation preceded this event. The highlight of the day was a "Benefit Auction"--definitely a "first" at Coggins. During the preceding weeks, the church family and others within the community had donated new and used items of furniture and appliances to be auctioned off to the highest bidder. The auction was a tremendous success as well as a lot of fun even though it did not reach its projected goal of $20,000 to help pay off the Agro-Care debt. The day also included a "Country Store" on the Agro-Care grounds with homemade crafts and baked goods available for sale. A giant flea market was held on the grounds, and items were sold as quickly as they were displayed. The entire community participated in this event which raised a total of **$9200.00** for Agro-Care Ministries. It would be impossible to mention all those who helped with this major project; needless to say, it required a lot of combined efforts.

The November-December 1985 issue of "Missions USA" featured an article on Rev. Bunce and Coggins Memorial entitled "Dearl Bunce: Plowing in Hunger Priorities." The article dealt with the church's involvement and Rev. Bunce's leadership in the areas of world hunger and cooperative gardening. It never ceased to amaze us how quickly our interest in world hunger was being made known throughout the state.

MEMORIAL GIFTS USED FOR SANCTUARY IMPROVEMENTS

It was with great appreciation that the church family accepted the recommendation that the Ellen Stiers Memorial fund, a fund set up by her children and grandchildren, be used to purchase and install wooden shutters for eleven of the sanctuary windows. Anyone who had been a member of Coggins for any length of time knew how great the need was for some "cosmetic" improvements on the windows which had been installed originally in 1951. The project was completed at a cost of $935.00. Tony Fortenberry and David Kephart stained and installed the shutters as a courtesy to the church. On September 8, 1985, a dedication service was held with the family of Ellen Stiers as special guests. Mrs. Stiers had been a member of Coggins for twenty-nine years when she died on January 1, 1980.

On January 13, 1985, the church voted to accept a bid of $2,683.62 from the National School and Industrial Corporation to install a new sound system in the sanctuary. The deacons had originally agreed to this proposal and had pledged $50.00 per deacon in support of their recommendation. The sound system was paid for entirely by special offerings by the members over a period of several months. To our great disappointment, however, this system has never adequately served the needs of our sanctuary and still tends to be a source of problems to the music and sound committees. Even though our original intent was to someday install this same system in a new sanctuary, the general opinion is that the system would never meet our needs in such an event.

Two attractive outdoor light fixtures were installed by Foster Call on the two front doors leading into the sanctuary and were provided

in memory of Eddie Carter who died on November 16, 1982. Mr. Carter was the husband of Ruby Carter and the father of Shirley Swing and had been a member of Coggins for eleven years.

WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

On June 16, 1985, a week of community-wide revival services was held at the North Davidson Senior High stadium and was sponsored by the North Davidson Minister's Association. The guest evangelist for this series was Dr. John Wesley White, a colleague of Billy Graham and a dynamic man of God. The church family participated in this worship opportunity.

On October 6-9, it was our pleasure to be a host church for the World Missions Conference with guest missionaries David Messer of Uruguay, Bill Hopkins and Bill Nowlin of the Home Mission Board, Dr. Larry Phillips of Peru, and Bobby Stafford of the state mission board. One of these men spoke each night and were an inspiration to us as they shared their experiences of being fulltime missionaries of the Good News.

Homecoming 1985 took place on September 29 as Rev. Bunce shared the morning message for this thirty-fourth anniversary. Special musical guests were the Byrd Quartet, the Murph Twins, and the Jung Family. Immediately following the meal in the fellowship hall, an afternoon singing was conducted by these groups.

Christman activities for the year included a delightful **"Candle-light Christmas Dinner"** on December 7, 1985. This was an original idea by the youth division who wanted to give a special Christmas gift to the church family. The event was held at Agro-Care lodge and was attended by reservation only. Not only was the lodge beautifully decorated, but the food was wonderfully prepared and our hosts and hostesses served each table individually. The entire evening, attended by approximately seventy-five couples and individuals, was a tremendous success and a true highlight of Christmas. The youth involved in this project received our highest accolades for their efforts.

As a church project an **"Angel Tree"** was erected in the foyer of the educational building complete with paper angels and names of thirty-one children hanging from the tree. The names had been given to the church by the Department of Social Services and were children ages 3-16 who would have no Christmas gifts other than those we would provide for them. Our church families quickly took all the names off the tree and provided lovely gifts suitable to be distributed to the respective children by the Dept. of Social Services. It was a wonderful opportunity to share a few of God's wonderful blessings during such a glorious time of the year.

The Lottie Moon Christmas offering for 1985 was a generous $3,388.00.

1985 ODDS AND ENDS: Newly-elected **deacons** for the year were Larry Stanley, Larry Riddle, Linwood Bunce, Keith Cude, Tommy Smith, and Don Beck. On August 18, Larry Stanley, Larry Riddle and Tommy Smith were ordained during a special worship service.

On May 5, **Mrs. Laura Ribelin** was recognized as the oldest mother present during morning worship. This was the day for "Baby Dedication," and the pastor thought it would be appropriate to not only recognize these young mothers and their babies, but to also salute the oldest mother in the service. Mrs. Ribelin was a lovely Christian lady who had been a faithful member of Coggins for twenty-five years. During the dedication service, five babies and their parents participated: Jeremy Christley, Katherine Swing, David Fulbright, Matthew Larson, and Jonathan Darnell.

On **Mother's Day**, May 12, Mrs. Tina Darnell was recognized as the mother present with the youngest child, and Mrs. Sallie Anderson received recognition as the oldest mother present on Mother's Day. Mrs. Anderson had been a member of Coggins Memorial for thirty-four years and was a charter member.

Five special young men, ages 6-9, were awarded **LAD I** badges for achievements in their Crusader chapter of Royal Ambassadors by completing various projects and written assignments. They were Justin Byrd, Michael Byrd, Kevin Martin, Kyle Martin, and Robbie McCormick. Badges were presented to them during worhsip on October 18.

The **Last Supper Drama** was once again presented on two separate nights on March 31 and April 4 with excellent attendance at both presentations. Through the years, this drama had lost none of its poignancy or beauty and was a favorite among our people. On Palm Sunday, the church shared in a lovely worship hour centered around the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem after which we marched to the square for a city-wide Easter worship in front of the old Courthouse. Worshippers from all downtown churches participated, but our people definitely had the longest walk!

Special speaker for **Baptist Men's Day** on February 24 was Larry Dean, a former member of Coggins who had moved to the eastern part of the state many years before. A **People Search** was conducted on December 8 with hundreds of people within the community being visited and invited to church. **VBS enrollment** for 1985 was 240 with nine decisions for Christ. Rev. Bunce and Betty attended the **Southern Baptist Convention** on June 11-13 in Fort Worth, Texas.

PARTNERSHIP IN WHOLENESS

As previously stated, the church voted to send Rev. Bunce and Betty to Togo, West Africa for a month mission tour. Offerings totaling $1600 were pledged by the congregation and great interest and enthusiasm was evident within the church family as preparations were made toward this end.

On Sunday, March 23, 1986, which was also Palm Sunday, a well-organized and beautifully conducted worship hour heralded as a "Commissioning Service" for the Bunces was held. The service consisted of special music by the choir and the Byrd Quartet, special testimonies from the Bunce children, presentations of a jar of "Love Notes" written by members of the church family in appreciation of the Bunces and their leadership, a basket of "goodies" to snack on while in Togo, and a message from Rev. Leonard Rollins. Visitors from Virginia and throughout North Carolina attended this lovely service as we met to worship and pray together for God's blessings upon our pastor

and Betty during their mission effort. As was stated in the bulletin for the service, it was a little known fact that the theme for the NC/Togo project, "Partnership in Wholeness," originated with Rev. Bunce who shared his idea with the state convention. This was to be a long and exhausting journey as well as a month of hardships and inconveniences, but the pastor and his wife felt privileged to have this great opportunity.

March 23 was also the day we began a week-long "Good News America--God Loves You!" simultaneous revival series with Dr. Robert Phipps as guest evangelist. This was a convention-wide emphasis of simultaneous services in which our people had voted to participate. It was the date of the presentation of "The Last Supper Drama" as well, so one can see that this date marked the beginning of an exhausting but wonderful series of worship opportunities and was without a doubt one of the busiest and most eventful Easter seasons the church had experienced.

On Sunday, March 30, the pastor and Betty left on their much-awaited mission tour to Togo. In the absence of the pastor, Leonard Rollins returned to Coggins to substitute for him. He conducted both Sunday services as well as Wednesday evening Bible study. It was a joy to have him leading during the month of April 1986.

Another 1986 event that will remain forever in the minds of those of us who were watching television on the fateful morning of Tuesday, January 28, was the lift-off of the Challenger from Cape Canaveral. We watched speechless as the Challenger rocket burst into flames and exploded only seconds after lift-off, killing all seven astronauts on board, including the first schoolteacher in space, Christa McAuliffe. It was so reminiscent of such tragedies as the assassinations of President John Kennedy, Senator Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, Jr.--events that happened before our eyes due to the large media coverage. On Sunday morning, February 2, the church held a special memorial worship service for those who died in Challenger: Com. Francis R. Scobee, Judith Resnik, Ellison Onizuka, Gregory B. Jarvis, Ronald McNair, Christa McAuliffe, and Michael J. Smith of North Carolina.

YOUTH PROGRAM FLOURISHES

This year brought many varied youth projects and activities which bear mention. On February 2, the youth choir (now named "Reflection") presented a youth musical titled "There's A Reason." It was a delightful presentation and reflected the months of rehearsal they had invested. In the summer of 1986, once again we hired a summer youth worker. Miss Christi Mull, whose family had recently joined our fellowship, served for twelve weeks in this capacity and blessed us with her magnificent vocal talent. Christi's ambition was to become a contemporary Christian recording artist, and she shared her musical ministry at every opportunity.

The young people felt a desire to plan and participate in a week-long mission tour to Hamilton, West Virginia on July 20-26, so they began working to make this possible. Car washes and yard sales helped raise funds for this project. Twelve youth took part in the mission trip which also included seeing some of the sites in Washingdon, D. C. It was a week filled with Bible studies, Vacation Bible School classes, and singing by our youth.

Like all young people, ours felt the need for a "room of their very own" in the church building. For that reason, they converted one of the larger rooms in the basement into a "Youth Recreation Room" and furnished it with a ping-pong table, sofa, chairs, stereo system, and posters galore. A distinctive addition to the door of this room is a sign that says "No Trespassing." Leave it to young people to be so innovative!

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES

On January 26, 1986 the men celebrated **Baptist Men's Day** and asked one of the new members, Tom Mull, to be guest speaker. Special music was provided by the men's chorus and the Byrd twins.

Baby Dedication Day continues to be a highlight of annual events at Coggins. On May 11, seven babies and parents participated in this s

dedicatory service. The babies were Frisco William Blackburn, Summer Joy Bowman, Matthew Craig Leonard, Graham Kendall Bunce, Amy Nicole George, Jordan Hunter Rummage, and Michael Todd Rummage.

The **Angel Tree** emphasis provided Christmas gifts for fourteen needy children during Christmas 1986. Special days such as **"A Day At the Park"** on August 24 were tremendous opportunities for fellowship. A softball game, watermelon cutting, and picnic lunch provided all the ingredients for a great day. At this year's **Associational Evangelism Rally** on August 31, Dr. Harper Shannon and Rev. Warren Kerr were the guest speakers. A well-planned and delightful Christian concert was held in the sanctuary on July 12 wtih the theme **"Let There Be Praise!"** Christi Mull, coordinator of the event, and others such as the Byrd Quartet, Mickey Sharpe, and the Nantz twins presented two hours of varying Christian music. A love offering was taken during the evening with all proceeds added to the youth fund to be used for their West Virginia mission trip.

We were privileged to visit Files Chapel, one of our black churches in Lexington, and join them in an afternoon worship service at their church. It was a joy to see the enthusiasm with which they sang hymns, prayed, and gave personal testimonies spontaneously. Their congregation sang with no instrument--only foot-tapping and hand-clapping in order to keep the rhythym of the music. This February 9 service was just one in a series of occasions during the history of the church that exemplified that we are indeed all brothers in one Christ, no matter what the color or background. Coggins' reputation of opening the doors to those of different races throughout the years is one of which we can be proud. Presently, we are blessed with eleven Cambodians in our fellowship.

PADDING THE PEWS--AFTER ALL THESE YEARS!

Finally, after many years of everybody discussing it and wishing for it but nobody ever doing anything about it, the ladies of Lois Beck's Sunday School class began a campaign to provide funds to have the sanctuary pews padded--not only for comfort but for appearance as well. These ladies spearheaded the campaign and made their recommenda-

tion to the deacons. It was approved by the church and special offerings began pouring in. The project began in September 1986 and resulted in the pews being padded in January 1987. This ladies class not only headed this project, but they also provided funds to have the altar table refinished and purchased a beautiful white altar cloth to replace the old worn blue one. It has also been their weekly project to help keep the Food Pantry furnished by bringing canned goods each Sunday and filling a box in their room, the contents of which are placed in the pantry each Monday.

Another special gift to the church was six wooden booster seats handmade by the Royal Ambassadors under the leadership of Dan Larson, Jack Byrd, and Jerry Byrd. The R. A.'s--Shawn Johnson, Robbie McCormick, Justin Byrd, Dustin Perry--presented these to the church to be used by our little ones in the fellowship hall during Wednesday night family meals.

LAST--BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST

New deacons for 1986 were David Kephart, Quentin Campbell, Nick Baker, Victor Kiger, and Randall George. Randall and Victor were ordained on Sunday, September 21, during a special worship service. **Homecoming** was held on September 28; however, the scheduled guest speaker, Dr. Chris White who was president of Gardner-Webb College, was unable to be with us. Rev. Bunce preached the Homecoming service in his absence.

The pastor was presented a special certificate in October 1986 by Campbell University, his alma mater. He was awarded the Centennial Alumni Award "for exemplifying the spirit of Campbell University in his community, occupation, and in support of his Alma Mater."

A first for the church was the publication of an **"Advent Booklet"** which was used as both bulletin and newsletter during December. This was a professionally printed eight-page booklet listing all worship opportunities, special musical presentations, and church fellowships taking place during Christmas. Not only was the book a beautiful addition to the worship, but it was a tremendous hit with the congregation who enjoyed having this information at their fingertips.

We end the year with a rundown of important statistics in the life of a church. There had been **sixteen baptisms** and **eleven other additions** during the year, making a total of **626 members.** The parsonage was valued at $70,000, and the church was in debt for a total of $67,120.00 due to our Agro-Care program. The Sunday School enrolment was now **242** with an average attendance of **139.** VBS enrollment for the summer had been **217.** The church budget was $97,085.00 with total receipts for the year of $129.791.00 and expenditures for the year of $82,680.00. Mission gifts totaled $13,248.00 including the Lottie Moon Offering which was $2961.75.

COGGINS MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH

AN EVALUATION OF THE FIRST THIRTY-FIVE YEARS

1951 - 1986

"Coggins Memorial Baptist Church--A Work of Faith"--what could be a more appropriate title for this complete church history? From the very beginning to the present day, our fellowship has shown a genuine boldness and distinctive courage in forging paths and beginning new areas of ministry for our Lord. From the inception of the establishment of this church, the inclusion of blacks in Vacation Bible School, the innovative outdoor worship services in the Food Town parking lot, and the expansion of our ministry into the unknown waters of Agro-Care Ministries, one can see that faith has played a major role. This is not to say that problems have not occurred throughout the years; rather, it is to say that when problems came along, we have hopefully used them as growth experiences.

Not only have we had many years of being "one in the bond of love," but we have also experienced times of great turmoil and division. We have seen members leave the fellowship due to charasmatic preferences in their personal worship. However, we have held true to our belief that Coggins Memorial is God's church and that He does not expect us to always have the same opinions or allegiances except to Christ our Savior himself.

What a wonderful thirty-five years we have had--years filled with beautiful memories, especially as one who was raised in this great fellowship since childhood. Not only do past experiences provide lovely memories, but they inspire new visions and hopes for the next thirty-five years at Coggins Memorial Baptist Church.

THE SIXTY-FIVE CHARTER MEMBERS

OF

COGGINS MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Waldo and Lois Beck
Foley and Lucille Coleman
George and Irene Hicks
Cletus and Rebecca Curry
Thurman and Lillian Fritts
Terry and Dorothy Lowery
Conrad and Aileen Lyon
Troy and Jenny Mitchell
William and Rebekah Link
Grady and Marie Rhodes
William and Jettie Brigman
Mr. and Mrs. W. O. Beck
Mrs. J. W. Abernathy
Miss Martha Abernathy
Miss Doris Brigman (Poole)
J. G. and Pearl Stiers
Mrs. Ellen Stiers
Mrs. E. J. Washburn
Mrs. E. Y. Harrington
Mr. and Mrs. Wayland Bowen
Betty Sue Ribelin (Bulla)
Rayvon and Bernice Yarbrough
Willie and Lela Yarbrough
Mrs. Grace Smith
Mrs. Minnie Sharpe
Janice Wood
Edgar and Bessie Bridges
Handy M. Byrd
P. J. Lowery
Lionel and Pansy Wall
Modie and Virginia Hough
Charles and Christine Cope
Jake Anderson
Noah and Sallie Anderson
Judith Byrd Dickens
Carlene Call
Kenneth and Magdalene Lawrence
Peggy Ann Washburn
Mrs. Bill Glass
Mr. and Mrs. Sam Cope
Mr. and Mrs. Bryce Nance

MEN ORDAINED INTO THE GOSPEL MINISTRY
BY
COGGINS MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH

WAYNE VUNCANNON

Wayne VunCannon was born on October 9, 1937 to O. L. and Vergie VunCannon. At the age of thirty, he accepted Christ and joined Coggins where he was baptized on June 4, 1968. In 1979, Wayne felt God's call to enter the ministry and began to work toward that end by entering Fruitland Bible Institute to prepare himself. He was licensed by Coggins Memorial on February 7, 1971 and was ordained on November 26, 1972.

After completing his studies, Wayne became pastor of the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church from September 1972 until January 1978 when he accepted the pastorate of the Cordova Baptist Church where he is presently serving. He and his wife, Hazel, have five children: Darrell Keith, Tammy Regina, Marty Wayne, Karen Remelle, and Daniel Lee.

Wayne was the first man from Coggins Memorial to be ordained into the gospel ministry.

RAYMOND LAWRENCE BYRD

Raymond was born on October 6, 1937 to Handy M. and Arietta C. Byrd in Durham. He accepted Christ and was baptized at Coggins Memorial on November 11, 1951. Raymond felt God's call to enter the ministry in June of 1971 and was ordained by Coggins Memorial on November 4, 1974 at the age of 37. He attended Fruitland Bible Institute and Mars Hill College in preparation for the ministry. At the time of his ordination, he was pastor of the Mountain Page Baptist Church in Saluda and served there from September 1974 until March 1978. He then became pastor of the Mills River Baptist Church in Horse Shoe, NC in 1978, later resigning that position to become pastor of Hicks Grove Baptist in Mooresboro where he is currently serving.

Raymond is married to the former Martha Ray and they have four children: Bonita Lynn Byrd Starnes, Christina Diane, Frank Crawley, and Nathan Patrobas.

CHARLES WILSON DICKENS

Charles was born on January 29, 1934 to Rev. J. W. Dickens and Ora Staton Dickens in Davidson County. He was raised in the Holloways Baptist Church where he was baptized at a young age, but he later moved his membership to Coggins on July 27, 1958. Charles felt the call into the ministry on October 31, 1972, was licensed by our church on November 4, 1972, and was then ordained on February 22, 1976. He attended Fruitland Bible Institute and the Isothermal Community College in Spindale and served as pastor at

Forest Lake Baptist in Forest City. Charles is now pastor of the Faith Baptist Church in Southmont which is in the Liberty Association.

Charles married the former Judith Byrd, and theirs was the first wedding performed at Coggins Memorial. They have three children: Gayle Dickens McCrary, Deborah Dickens Berger, and Gregory C. Dickens. They also have three grandchildren: Robert Benjamin, Joshua Paul, and Andrea Kay McCrary.

Charles' father, Rev. J. W. Dickens, was the first part-time pastor of the newly organized Coggins Memorial Baptist Church.

ROBERT PAUL MCCRARY

Robert was born on July 1, 1955 to Robert Coy McCrary and Ruth Smith McCrary in Lexington. He was baptized at Coggins on November 11, 1962 at the age of seven, was raised in our fellowship, and felt the call into the ministry at the age of fifteen while being an active member of the SPARKS youth team. He was licensed on June 2, 1974 and was ordained on March 17, 1979 at Coggins. Robert received his education by graduating from Davidson County Community College in May 1975 and from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in May 1977. He received his Bachelor of Divinity and Master of Divinity degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest in December 1980.

Robert became pastor of the Purdy Baptist Church in Emporia, Virginia and served there from February 17, 1979 until November 6, 1982. Before his first fulltime pastorate, he served as Youth Minister from May 10, 1978 to August 28, 1978 at Bedford Baptist Church in Bedford, Virginia. He later became pastor of the Peace's Chapel Baptist Church in Oxford on September 7, 1982 and is currently serving there. His wife, Gayle, is Minister of Music.

Robert married the former Vanessa Gayle Dickens, and they have three children: Robert Benjamin, Joshua Paul, and Andrea Kay.

CHARLES TIMOTHY ROBBINS

Tim was born on July 9, 1949 to Carl Ray Robbins and Louise McCrary Robbins of Lexington. He was baptized on March 3, 1959 at Coggins Memorial and felt the call into the ministry in 1973. He was then licensed by our church on September 1, 1974 and later ordained on October 11, 1981. In Tim's words, "It was Betty Bunce's suggestion that the Lord may be calling me into the preaching ministry. It was Dearl's special care for me that paved the way. It was my wife and the Coggins family that loved me enough to accept my wrecked life and taught me to walk once again." Tim was educated at Davidson County Community College, received his B.A. in Sociology from UNC-Greensboro in 1977, and worked on his Master of Divinity degree at both Southeastern and Southwestern Seminaries during the years 1977-81. He served in the U. S. Navy and was honorably discharged in 1975. He has served as interim pastor for Ball Street Baptist in Weatherford, Texas, and pastor of McKenney Baptist in McKenney, Virginia and the Beechwood Baptist Church in Newport News, Virginia. Tim is currently pastor of the Masseponax Baptist Church in Fredericsburg, VA.

He is married to the former Regina Lee Hanes and they have five children: Michaella, Anna, Stephen, James, and Karah.

THE PASTORS OF COGGINS MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH

REV. JESSE W. DICKENS
August 5, 1951 - May 23, 1952

Rev. Dickens was born on September 30, 1891 to Jessie Wilson, Sr. and Tryphina Forshee and was raised in Davidson County. He attended Churchland Boarding School and later received his ministerial training in 1952 at Fruitland Bible Institute.

He was the first part-time pastor of the newly-established Coggins Memorial Baptist Church and was instrumental in seeing that the church was organized as Southern Baptist. His pastorates included Center Hill, Smith Grove, and Coggins Memorial.

Rev. Dickens was married to the former Ora Eleen Staton and they had six children: Treva Lee Stroud, Donald Benjamin, Paul, Myrtle Carrick, Bette Jean Myers, and Charles Wilson Dickens. Upon his death on May 23, 1952, he had nine grandchildren. Rev. Dickens died as the result of a car accident while returning to Coggins after attending school at Fruitland. His last Sunday with this congregation was on Groundbreaking Day, March 23, 1952. His son, Charles Dickens, was later ordained into the ministry by our church family.

REV. LEONARD ROLLINS
August 3, 1952 - March 10, 1963

Leonard Rollins became the first full-time pastor of Coggins Memorial on August 3, 1952. A native of Spindale, Rev. Rollins was ordained by the First Baptist Church there in February of 1950. He is a graduate of Mars Hill and Wake Forest colleges, New Orleans Seminary and Southeastern Seminary at Wake Forest. During his college days, he was active in youth revivals across the state.

He served as assistant pastor of Brown Memorial, Hickory; First Baptist, Lexington; and Hocutt Memorial, Burlington. He also served for a while at Dozier Baptist Church in Dozier, Alabama.

Rev. Rollins married the former Mary Frances White of Birmingham. She is a graduate of Birmingham-Southern College and received her Master of Religious Education degree from the New Orleans Baptist Seminary. They have three children: Jane Coldiron of Atlanta who teacher kindergarten in Gwinnet County; Lou Russell of High Point who is Director of Donor Relations for the Baptist Children's Homes; and Ann Rollins, a teacher in the Lexington Children's Center. Rev. and Mrs. Rollins also have one grandson, Matthew, age four, son of Jane and Steve Coldiron.

DR. DEARL L. BUNCE
July 1, 1969 - January 28, 1975
August 27, 1979 - Present

Dearl Bunce is a native of Wade in Cumberland County, the youngest of thirteen children. He was ordained by the Stedman Baptist Church in Stedman on February 26, 1966. He attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for one year and then graduated from Campbell University where he obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree. In 1970, he received the Master of Divinity degree from Southeastern Seminary at wake Forest and later earned his Doctor of Ministry degree from Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky in 1982. His dissertation was Coggins Memorial Baptist Church's Involvement In A Meaningful World Hunger Ministry. Before entering the ministry, Rev. Bunce owned and operated D. L. Bunce Produce and was later president of Bunce Brothers Farms, Inc. He has served as pastor in the Crestwood Baptist Church in Smithfield,

the Bedford Baptist Church in Bedford, Virginia, and two separate pastorates at Coggins Memorial.

He is married to the former Betty Lou Graham of Cumberland County. Betty is a graduate of Methodist College in Fayetteville where she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree, and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro where she received the Master of Arts degree. She also has taught in public schools for eight years as well as currently serving as Minister of Music at Coggins Memorial.

The Bunces have three children: Linwood, a lawyer in Lexington; Graham, a local businessman and contractor; and Elizabeth (Beth), a lawyer in Savannah, Georgia. They have seven grandchildren: Adam, Brianna, Daryn Currie, Lin Cohen, Graham Kendall, June Dare, and Russela Franklin.

REV. C. RICHARD CHAPMAN
February 1, 1964 - August 20, 1968

Richard Chapman was a native of Spartanburg County, S. C. and was a graduate of North Greenville Junior College, Furman University, and Southeastern Seminary. He was pastor formerly of the Hillcrest Baptist Church in Burgaw, Coggins Memorial, and Southside Baptist in Camden, SC. Upon his death, he was pastor of the Poplar Springs Baptist Church in Moore, SC.

Rev. Chapman had also organized and constituted the Westside Baptist Church in Kokomo, Indiana. He was married to the former Myra Easler and had two children: Steve of Danville, VA, and Crystal of Columbia, SC.

Rev. Chapman died on May 22, 1987 at his home in Moore, SC, after suffering from brain cancer for many months.

REV. JERRY STEVEN LAUGHTER
August 31, 1975 - May 31, 1978

Jerry Laughter was born in Kings Mountain and received his education from Kings Mountain High School, Gardner-Webb College, and Southeastern Seminary. He was licensed by the First Baptist Church in Lowell, NC, in 1966 and was later ordained by the Wakeminster Baptist Church in Raleigh in 1969. He had served as Minister of Music at the Unity Baptist Church, Midway Baptist, and Fairview Baptist of Gastonia, the First Baptist Church of Lowell, and the Valley Hill Baptist Church in Henderson. He had also served as Associate Pastor and Minister of Music at the Bethlehem Baptist Church in Kings Mountain. His pastorates included Wakeminster Baptist, Casar Baptist, Coggins Memorial, Scotts Creek Baptist of Sylva. He is presently pastor of the First Baptist Church in Iva, SC, where he has been since 1979.

Rev. Laughter is married to the former Frances Williams of Kings Mountain. They have two children: Renee, age 25, and Kenny, age 21.

REV. INMAN LEE STEWART
Pastor Emeritus

Inman Stewart ws raised in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains until third grade at which time his family moved to Mount Airy. He worked in the furniture industry and moved to Thomasville in order to get a job.

In 1941, at the age of 30, he accepted Christ at the First Baptist Church in Thomasville, was later baptized, and moved his membership to Reid Street Baptist (now Park Place). At a late age, he felt the call to preach; therefore, he continued to work to support his family and participated in night classes in Winston-Salem and correspondence courses from the Moody

Bible Institute. He became pastor of the North Oak Baptist Church in Yadkin County in 1946. He was also ordained into the ministry by the Reid Street Baptist Church at this same time. In 1948, he and his family joined Rich Fork Baptist and later he became interim pastor there. In 1957, Rev. Stewart began a mission ministry in the Hasty Community because of the great need he saw there. During this time, he was called as pastor of Summerville Baptist in Denton and served both churches at the same time. When the Hasty Baptist Church called him as fulltime pastor in 1959, Rev. Stewart resigned at Summerville. He pastored Hasty Baptist for eighteen years until 1974 when he resigned and retired. During his retirement, he has served as interim at Coggins Memorial, Archdale, Bethel Baptist, North Lexington, and Friendly Baptist in High Point.

In 1979, Rev. Stewart was honored by Coggins Memorial Baptist Church by being named "Pastor Emeritus" for his loving and faithful service to this congregation throughout the years.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
1958

YOUTH DINNER 1960

MARY BECK COGGINS

G. A. RECOGNITION SERVICE 1955

LEONARD ROLLINS' BIRTHDAY
1950

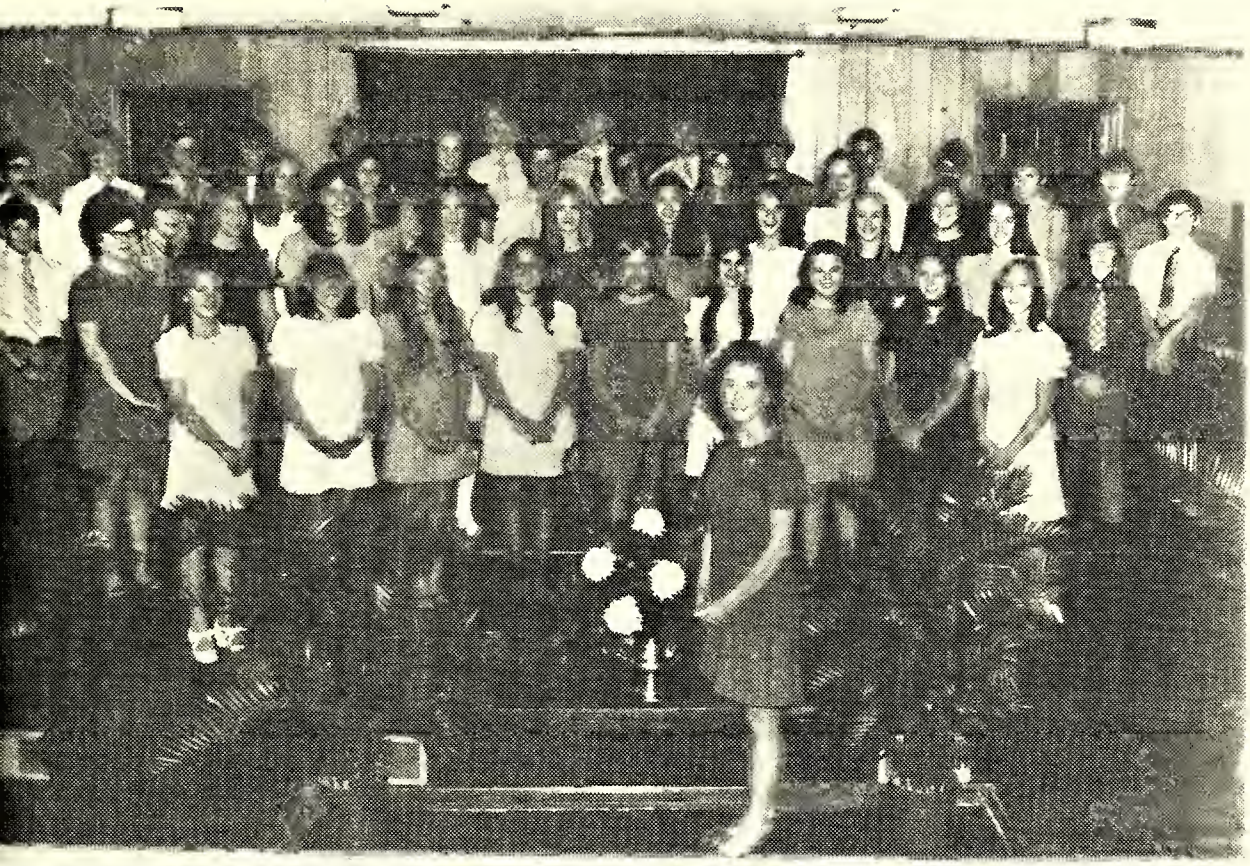
HOMECOMING 1967

BABY DEDICATION DAY
1970

COGGINS MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH

"BIG PICTURE DAY"

APRIL 29, 1973



THE "SPARKS"
WITH DIRECTOR, BETTY BUNCE
1971

JUN · 59

G. A. CORONATION SERVICE 1955

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 1974

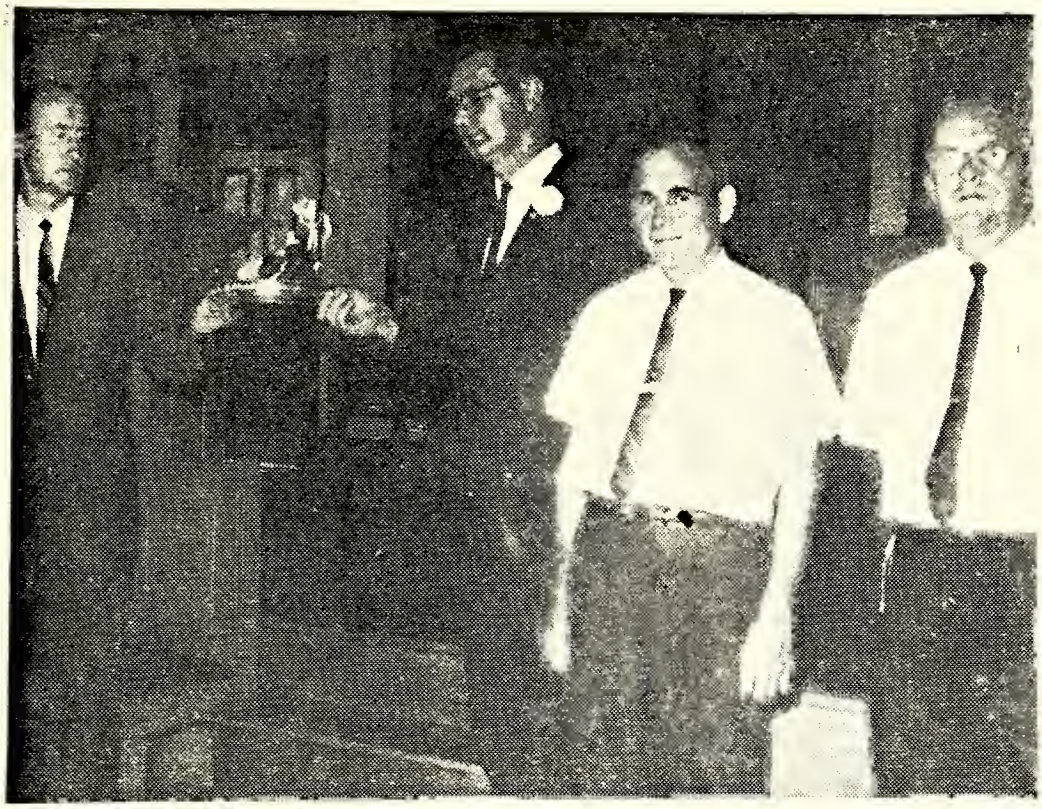
1025 PUPILS
125 FACULTY

ABOVE:

OUTDOOR WORSHIP SERVICES
1973

RIGHT:

AGRO-CARE LODGE
1986



MORTGAGE IS BURNED — Rev. Leonard Rollins, left, and Rev. Richard Chapman hold a plate on which a mortgage was burned at Coggins Memorial Baptist Church yesterday. Two leading members of the church who participated in the ceremony are standing at right—H. M. Byrd and Coy McCrary. (Dennis Carter Photo)

NOTE BURNING SERVICE
LEAVING CHURCH DEBT-FREE
HOMECOMING 1967

AGRO-CARE CHAPEL 1985

Faithful Group of Deacons From A Growing Church

The church having the largest number of men at the recent Deacon's Retreat at Caswell Assembly was the Coggins Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, Rev. Leonard Rollins, pastor. The fact that this church had more deacons present than any other church was not surprising to folks in the Liberty Association who have marveled at the way these men support all phases of the Baptist program. And then to make the record more outstanding, the church is only two years old. The men have a Brotherhood and at every quarterly meeting of the Liberty Associational Deacons, the church has a large representation on hand. This growing church is setting an example for many older churches to follow in its whole hearted support of the Baptist program. The man on top in this picture is George Hicks, and left to right on the ground are Thurman Fritts, Kenneth Lawrence, Troy Mitchell, William C. Lyon, and Foley Coleman.

GROUNDBREAKING AT COGGINS MEMORIAL Baptist Church—Rev. Jesse W. Dickens, pastor, turns the first shovel of earth at ceremonies heralding the erection of the Coggins Memorial Baptist Church on South Main Street here. The ceremonies, twice postponed, were held on Palm Sunday, and were attended by a large crowd of Baptist dignitaries and friends and members of the church. Rev. J. Roy Clifford delivered the main address, and others who took shovels of earth in the ceremonies were Thurman Fritts, Foley Coleman and Sam Smith. Rev. Van Carroll, of Reeds, Associational Missionary, who has filled the pulpit many times at Coggins Memorial, also participated in the services, and is standing directly behind Mr. Dickens in the picture above.

GROUNDBREAKING DAY
MARCH 23, 1952